

2.10 p.m. -

October 18th. 1913.

№ 367.

Telegraph to S. Fischer. Jan 6. 1861.

Separate action by Austria before even
consult other Powers makes things very difficult.
The usual course would be not to take
separate action till after some attempt is made
to obtain cooperation of other Powers. For
Austria to present an ultimatum to Serbia or
then to demand the support of other Powers is
in a sense to present the Powers with an
ultimatum.

Apart from this I think Serbia has
some ground of complaint owing to delay
of the Powers in establishing any settled
Govt. in Albania.

I am however prepared to ^{support} ~~accept~~ at
Belgrade the decisions of the Ambassadors;
Conference in London respecting frontiers ^{between} ~~with~~
Albania & Serbia, - & ^{advise} ~~inform~~ that Serbia
Govt. should give an unequivocal assurance
that ~~troops~~ ^{troops} Serbia will respect that frontier
and ~~is willing~~ ^{these} her troops have only crossed it
~~in~~ ^{as} an emergency measure &
will be withdrawn. at the earliest practicable moment.

✓ Report to Pains & St Petersburg 706

Tel. No 3726
Tel. No 7075 St. St.



British Documents on the Origins of the War 1898-1914

Edited by G. P. GOOCH, D.Litt., F.B.A., and
HAROLD TEMPERLEY, Litt.D., F.B.A.

Vol. X PART I THE NEAR AND MIDDLE EAST ON THE EVE OF WAR

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VOLUME X
PART I
THE NEAR AND MIDDLE EAST
ON THE EVE OF WAR

Edited by
G. P. GOOCH, D.Litt., and HAROLD TEMPERLEY, Litt.D.
with the assistance of
LILLIAN M. PENSON, Ph.D.

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Foreword to Volume X (Part I).

THE decision to publish a selection from the British Documents dealing with the origins of the War was taken by Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in the summer of 1924. It was confirmed and announced by Mr. (now Sir) Austen Chamberlain in a letter of the 28th November, 1924 (published in "The Times" on the 3rd December), addressed to Dr. R. W. Seton-Watson. Some extracts from this letter were published by the Editors in the Foreword to Volume XI, and it need only be said here that the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs referred to "impartiality and accuracy" as being the necessary qualifications for any work which the Editors were to publish.

The topics of the present volume are all outgrowths of the Balkan Wars, except for the Potsdam Meeting of the German and Russian Emperors, and the Anglo-Russian friction in Persia. In spite of these exceptions, the volume has an underlying unity in a common concern with the action of the Great Powers. The Potsdam Meeting caused England to doubt Russia, and the Persian problem revived the uncertainty; and every other question treated in this volume affected the relation of the Triple Entente to the Triple Alliance. The *Ægean Islands* and Albania are subjects on which the British documents throw relatively little light, as the ground has already been well covered in the publications of foreign governments. But there is much that is new about the Potsdam Meeting and the problem of Armenian Reform; and for the first time the British side of the Persian question, more particularly that relating to the dismissal of the American Mr. Shuster, is fully revealed. Better known are the incidents attending the Austro-Hungarian ultimatum to Serbia of October 1913 and the dangerous question of the Liman von Sanders Mission (Chapter LXXXVII). In both cases peace was secured. These incidents are a kind of rehearsal of the quarrel between Austria-Hungary and Germany on one side, and Serbia and Russia on the other, which found so fatal a termination in 1914. In the case of the ultimatum to Serbia of 1913 the views of Sir E. Goschen and Sir Edward Grey and the minute of Sir Eyre Crowe will be read with interest (*v. infra*, pp 35-8). It is also of unusual importance that, on this occasion, M. de Hartwig, the celebrated Russian Minister at Belgrade, asserts that he put pressure on Serbia to secure her surrender (*v. infra*, pp. 45-6).

The questions of a European guarantee of the *Ægean isles* and of an Entente between Greece and England are discussed by M. Venizelos (pp. 95-6, 194-5), and an interesting tribute to this statesman's policy in Epirus is paid by Sir F. Elliot (pp. 107-8). On the Straits question Sir Edward Grey's views are unusually important in view of his resolve to keep them open to commerce if necessary by force (p. 262). His realization that a threat to every Power interested in Turkey was made by the position offered to Liman von Sanders in Turkey (p. 347) is also striking. Sir Eyre Crowe's suggestion of finding a way out for Germany and Sir Edward Grey's approval and summing up of the whole question throw new light on British policy (pp. 400-2, 423), and exhibit some suspicion of M. Sazonov. A letter by Mr. Shuster is printed (pp. 788-9) and Sir Edward Grey's utterances on that 'singleminded' man (pp. 795, 815-6, 838-9, 862-3) have a mournful interest. Sir Edward Grey's letter to Dr. Hodgkin as a statement of his Persian policy has great value (pp. 898-9). In the volume as a whole conversations with Russian statesmen are not of great importance, but the interview with M. Neratov (pp. 846-52) is worth careful study.

It is important to understand that Russia's policy in Asia was a factor affecting British pre-war policy to a much greater extent than is usually perceived. It is hoped that the publication of these documents, together with much new material on the Armenian Reforms, will be useful. In connection with Asia Minor it is well to notice that the whole question of Armenian reform was discussed by the British Government on the assumption that the Cyprus Convention of 1878 was still in force. Throughout this volume Sir Edward Grey appears in the light of a pacificator, but the part he played in such questions as Epirus, Albania, Armenia and Persia during these years has, hitherto, been little recognized.

The documents printed in the Appendix (pp. 901-2) refer to the renewal in June 1918 of the proposal of Turkey for an alliance, previously made at the time of the Tripoli War (Vol. IX (I), pp. 779-81). The incident is interesting mainly because of the reply it elicited from Sir Edward Grey—a reiteration of his belief that the safety of Turkey lay in co-operation with all the Great Powers and not in alliance with one of them.

Once again the private papers of Sir Edward Grey and Lord Carnock have proved of invaluable assistance, not only in interpreting the attitude of the Secretary of State and his principal adviser, but in revealing the inmost thoughts of the British representatives abroad as expressed in their confidential correspondence. It is as well to mention again the statement of Lord Grey (already quoted in Volume VI, p. ix): "I did not, however, regard anything except my own letters and official papers as deciding policy."

In accordance with the practice observed in the preceding volumes the documents in the present volume containing information supplied or opinions expressed by certain Foreign Governments have been communicated to them for their agreement. The response has been satisfactory. The Editors can therefore assert, as in all previous volumes, that they have omitted nothing which they consider essential to the understanding of the history of the period. In this connexion they beg to draw attention to their statement made in previous volumes "that they would feel compelled to resign if any attempt were made to insist on the omission of any document which is, in their view, vital or essential."

In addition to despatches and telegrams, there are memoranda and minutes which are properly official documents. No objection has been raised by His Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to the publication in this volume of any documents of the above kind, nor to the publication of certain similar papers or of private letters, which are not properly official documents, but which are preserved in the Foreign Office.

His late Majesty King George V had graciously consented to the publication of two letters expressing his views (pp. 588, 595). The Editors have again to acknowledge the friendly assistance and advice of various officials at the Foreign Office, among whom they would like to mention the Librarian, Sir Stephen Gaselee, K.C.M.G., and Mr. A. F. Orchard. They wish also to thank the officials of the Public Record Office in London and Mr. Wright, who is in charge of the Diplomatic and Embassy Archives formerly at Cambridge and now at Canterbury. Miss E. M. Keate, M.B.E., has assisted throughout in the preparation of the volume for Press. Miss D. M. Griffith, M.A., and Miss I. B. Johnston, B.A., have also given help in this part of the work.

G. P. GOOCH.
HAROLD TEMPERLEY.

Note on the Arrangement of Documents, &c.

The technical arrangement and details of this volume are very similar to those of Volumes III, IV, VI, VII, and IX. The material deals with two main themes, the problems of the Near East in 1913-14, and those of the Middle East in 1908-11.

Within the chapters the papers are placed in chronological order, as in previous volumes, and, as before, chronological order means the date of despatch, whether to or from London, not the date of receipt. The latter date is added wherever possible, and readers should be careful to note it.

In this volume, as in Volume IX (II), none of the documents date from the period before 1906, and it is therefore unnecessary to repeat the note on the classification of the papers before that date, for which reference may be made to Volume I (p. ix).

The note prefaced to Volume III (pp. ix-x) described further the arrangement inaugurated at the beginning of 1906:—

“A new system was inaugurated at the beginning of the year 1906. From that date all papers, irrespective of country, are first divided into certain general categories, ‘*Political*’ (the former ‘*diplomatic*’), *Commercial*, *Consular*, *Treaty*, &c. The papers are, however, not removed from their original files, the contents of each file being treated as one document. The files of papers are classified within the general categories according to the country to which their subject most properly belongs. The volumes containing papers relating to any country are therefore in a sub-section of the main series, and these sub-sections are arranged in alphabetical order (*e.g.*, *Political*, *Abyssinia*, &c.). Previously the correspondence with, say, the British Ambassador at Paris was kept distinct from the communications of the French Ambassador in London, the latter being termed ‘*Domestic*.’ This distinction is now abolished, and all papers relating to a subject are placed together in one file or in a series of files. The historian finds many difficulties in this arrangement, as the files are not arranged in the volumes in chronological order or alphabetical sequence. The Foreign Office overcomes these difficulties by compiling a manuscript register of the contents, but this method cannot be used so satisfactorily by the historian. It is to be feared that the new arrangement makes it more difficult for the historian to be sure he has found all the papers relating to a given incident.”

For the period covered by the first half of the present volume the documents are still at the Foreign Office, in the original loose jackets. A combination of three methods has again been used in the survey of the available material:—

(1) A comprehensive study has been made of the *Confidential Print*, which contains, as the period develops, an increasingly large proportion of the papers. Documents traced in this way have, as before, been checked by the originals in the Foreign Office files, and notes and minutes added. In a few cases in this, as in previous volumes, a note at the foot of a document has been inserted to show that no original can be traced. In the majority of these instances, however, this does not mean that there is no registered jacket for the paper, but that the jacket contains a printed copy as the official record.

(2) Application has been made to the Foreign Office library staff for papers and files of papers to which reference has been found.

(3) The Foreign Office registers of despatches and telegrams sent to or received from British Embassies or Legations have been searched. In a few cases this has revealed documents which were not included in the *Confidential Print*, either because they were not considered at the time of sufficient importance or because they were regarded as especially confidential.

In the note prefaced to the previous volume (Volume IX (II), pp. x-xii) an analysis was given, based on the evidence provided by the documents themselves, of the practice followed in the circulation of papers to the Cabinet. Reference was made there to the formation of a Cabinet Committee in 1911 for the discussion of Anglo-German negotiations (p. xii). The papers printed in the present volume throw some further light on its origin and working. It will be remembered that Sir Arthur Nicolson stated in a letter of March 2, 1911, that it had "been quite recently constituted" (Vol. VI, p. 590, No. 440) to deal with "the larger questions which we have to discuss with the German Government." It now appears that certain documents dealing with the Russo-German negotiations resulting from the Potsdam meeting were referred to this Committee. The first reference is given *infra*, p. 629, No. 659, note ⁽¹⁾. On this occasion Sir Edward Grey merely endorsed the despatch, which was received on January 30, 1911, for circulation to the Cabinet Committee. The next instance, p. 639, No. 666, note ⁽¹⁾, is an out-despatch originally dated January 27 and ultimately January 31. In this case Sir Edward Grey wrote in the margin of the draft directions for circulation to the King and the Cabinet Committee, and added a definition of this body. The personnel is identical with that given by Sir Arthur Nicolson in his letter of March 2. It would appear therefore that the Committee was formed immediately upon the resumption of the Anglo-German negotiations at the beginning of 1911. For subsequent references to the circulation of papers to this body *r. infra*, p. 672, No. 698, note ⁽¹⁾; p. 698, No. 717, note ⁽¹⁾; p. 698, No. 721, note ⁽¹⁾; p. 701, No. 723, note ⁽¹⁾; p. 705, No. 727, note ⁽¹⁾.

The Editors have recorded in previous volumes their regret that the Embassy archives for the period after 1905 are not generally available. With the exception of Japan (to 1910) and Russia, the Embassies and Legations have not yet sent their later papers to England. The Editors can, however, confirm the judgment previously expressed that the records are more exact and complete after 1906. There are a few cases in the present volume in which the original texts of documents occurring in the *Confidential Print* have proved impossible to trace. In the large number of cases where opportunities for comparison exist such copies have been found to be verbally exact, though the punctuation and capitalisation are standardised.

The private collections available at the Foreign Office continue to be of great value. Many letters have been printed from the private correspondence of Sir Edward (Lord) Grey, and Sir Arthur Nicolson (Lord Carnock). The papers of Lord Lansdowne are also now available for use. Some of these were found too late to be published in the earlier volumes of this series, but selections will be published in a later volume. The value of such material is evident, but it is, generally speaking, more complete in respect of in-letters than out-letters.

LILLIAN M. PENSON.

Plan of Volume X (Part I).

Chapter LXXXIV is devoted to the fortunes of the independent state of Albania created by the Powers after the defeat of Turkey in the Balkan wars. The first section describes the efforts of the Austro-Hungarian Government, culminating in the ultimatum of October 18, 1913, to secure the withdrawal of Servian troops from Albanian territory—a demand promptly obeyed by Serbia and quietly accepted by Russia. The second section deals with the choice by the Powers of Prince Wilhelm of Wied as the ruler of Albania, his arrival at Durazzo in March, 1914, the grave internal difficulties which he encountered, and the termination of his brief reign by the outbreak of the world war.

The story of the discussion of the ownership of the Ægean Islands begun at the Conference of Ambassadors in London is continued in Chapter LXXXV. The main problem is the reconciliation of the conflicting claims of Greece and Turkey; for the attitude of the latter, though defeated in the Balkan war, had stiffened since she was no longer faced by a united Balkan front. A second, though less dangerous, aspect of the question was the delay of Italy in fulfilling her conditional promise under the Treaty of Lausanne to evacuate the Dodecanese. No solution of either problem had been reached at the outbreak of war in 1914.

A number of documents are grouped together in Chapter LXXXVI which illustrate the relations of the Balkan states to one another and to the Great Powers between the Treaty of Bucharest and the outbreak of the world war. The most significant are those which indicate the trend of Bulgaria towards the Central Powers and of Rumania towards Russia.

Chapter LXXXVII describes the consternation in Russia aroused by the appointment in November 1913 of General Liman von Sanders to superintend the reorganisation of the Turkish army and to command the First Army Corps in Constantinople. While sympathising with Russian anxieties as to the increase of German influence, Sir Edward Grey believed the importance of the Military Mission to be exaggerated. He declined to join in pressure on Turkey and favoured discussions between St. Petersburg and Berlin. That a British Admiral was in command of the Turkish fleet in time of peace was an additional argument for caution. The crisis, which caused more alarm than any other matter during the last year of peace, was terminated by a German concession, General Liman being appointed Inspector-General of the Turkish army instead of Commander of the First Army Corps.

The little known story of the last attempt to introduce reforms in the Armenian provinces of Asia Minor forms the subject of Chapter LXXXVIII. Since the defeat of Turkey by the Balkan States seemed likely to involve the danger of a general scramble for her Asiatic territories, the Turkish Government invited the British Government to supply experts, both military and civil, for the Armenian vilayets. Such unilateral assistance being ruled out by the determination of Russia to share in the task of reform, plans were elaborated between Turkey and the Powers. Two Inspectors-General of the Armenian vilayets were selected from the minor Powers in April 1914; but the reform machinery had not begun to work when the world war broke out.

Chapter LXXXIX describes in detail the temporary Russo-German *rapprochement* inaugurated by the visit of the Emperor Nicholas to Potsdam in November 1910, when Russia withdrew her objections to the Bagdad Railway, and the plan of a junction of the Bagdad-Khanikin extension with a future Persian line under Russian auspices was amicably discussed. The fears of French statesmen that Russia might drift back into the German orbit were not fully shared in London. Yet it was felt in British official circles that Sazonov, in his first enterprise as Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, had gone too far in his conversations at Potsdam and had shown too little consideration for his partners in the Triple Entente. The Russo-German Agreement signed on August 19, 1911, recognised Russia's predominance in Northern Persia, and envisaged the construction of a line from Teheran to Khanikin when the Bagdad Railway was sufficiently advanced for a junction to be effected.

The friction between Great Britain and Russia in Persia after the signing of the Anglo-Russian Convention in 1907 is illustrated in Chapter XC. The first section consists of summaries of the situation in Persia taken from the Annual Reports on Russia for the years 1908, 1909 and 1910 by the British Ambassador in St. Petersburg. The second deals with the appointment of Mr. Shuster, an American expert, as Treasurer-General of the Persian Empire, and his arrival in Tehran in May 1911. The third is devoted to the sharp conflict between Mr. Shuster and the Russian Government arising out of his appointment of Major Stokes, a Persian-speaking officer in the Indian army, to command a Treasury gendarmerie designed to secure the collection of the taxes. The veto of the Russian Government on a British officer operating in the Russian zone was endorsed by Sir Edward Grey, by whose instructions the appointment was cancelled. The fourth and final section records the subsequent conflicts of the Treasurer-General with the Russian authorities in Tehran, the occupation of portions of Northern Persia by Russian troops, and the successful demand for the expulsion of Mr. Shuster. While agreeing with the Russian Government that he had misused his position, Sir Edward Grey was nevertheless alarmed lest the Russian forces should march to Tehran. For the first and last time, though only for a brief space, the Anglo-Russian entente hung by a thread.

The Appendix supplements the materials given in Chapter LXXXVI for studying the foreign relations of the Balkan Powers by documents recording the overture of Turkey to Great Britain in the summer of 1913 and the reply made by Sir Edward Grey.

Errata.

Page 294, No. 326, *note* (2), line 2. For "Bulgarian" read "Servian."

Page 361, No. 406, *note* (3). For "*G.P.*, XXXVIII, pp. 208-11" read "*G.P.*, XXXVIII, pp. 239-40."

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List of Abbreviations.

<i>A. & P.</i>	British Parliamentary Papers, <i>Accounts and Papers</i>
<i>B.F.S.P.</i>	...	..	...	<i>British and Foreign State Papers.</i>
<i>D.D.F.</i>	...	...	...	<i>Documents Diplomatiques Français</i> (1871-1914).
<i>G.P.</i>	...	...	...	<i>Die Grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinette</i>
<i>Imperialismus</i>	...	.		<i>Die Internationalen Beziehungen im Zeitalter des Imperialismus.</i>
<i>Ö.-U.A.</i>	...	..	...	<i>Österreich-Ungarns Aussenpolitik</i> (1908-14).
<i>Parl. Deb.</i>	...	...		<i>Parliamentary Debates</i> (<i>House of Lords</i> or <i>House of Commons</i>).
<i>Pribram</i>	...	...	...	A. F. Pribram: <i>Secret Treaties of Austria-Hungary</i> (Harvard University Press, 1920-1).
<i>Siebert</i>	...	...	...	B. de Siebert: <i>Entente Diplomacy and the World</i> , edited, arranged and annotated by G. A. Schreiner (New York and London, 1921). [This is an English translation with the addition of a chronological list of documents by the American Editor of <i>Diplomatische Aktenstücke zur Geschichte der Entente politik der Vorkriegsjahre</i> (Berlin and Leipzig, 1921).]
<i>Siebert-Benckendorff</i>	...		...	This refers to a new German edition of the above by Herr von Siebert, containing a number of additions. It is entitled <i>Graf Benckendorffs Diplomatischer Schriftwechsel</i> (Berlin and Leipzig, 1928).
<i>Stieve</i>	...	...	...	<i>Der Diplomatische Schriftwechsel Isvolskis</i> (1911-4) (Berlin, 1924).
<i>Twenty-Five Years</i>	...		...	Lord Grey: <i>Twenty-Five Years, 1892-1916</i> (2 vols., 1925).

Names of Writers of Minutes.

F. D. A.	= Mr. F. D. Acland	..	...	...	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1911-5.
E. A. C.	= Mr. (later Sir) Eyre Crowe	...	...	...	Senior Clerk in Foreign Office, 1906-12; Assistant Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1912-20; Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1920-5.
G. R. C.	= Mr. (later Sir) George R. Clerk	...	...	...	Clerk in Foreign Office, 1907-10; 1912-3; Acting First Secretary at Constantinople, 1910-2; Senior Clerk in Foreign Office, 1913-9; Private Secretary to Lord Curzon, 1919; Minister at Prague, 1919-25; Ambassador at Angora, 1926-33; at Brussels, 1933-4; at Paris, 1934- .
D.	= The 10th Earl of Drogheda	...	...	...	Clerk in the Foreign Office, 1907-14.
E. G.	= Sir Edward (later Viscount) Grey (of Fallodon)				Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, December 11, 1905-December 11, 1916.
J. D. G.	= Mr. J. D. Gregory	...	...	...	Clerk in Foreign Office, 1902-7; 2nd Secretary at Vienna, 1907-9; at Bucharest, 1909; at Foreign Office, 1909; Assistant Clerk, 1913-20; Assistant Secretary, 1920-5; Assistant Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1925-8.
R. C. L.	= The Hon. (later Sir) Ronald C. Lindsay				Clerk in Foreign Office, 1908-11; Assistant Private Secretary to Sir E. Grey, 1908-9; 2nd Secretary (later 1st) at the Hague, 1911-2 (sometimes <i>Chargé d'Affaires</i>); Under-Secretary in Egyptian Ministry of Finance, 1913-9; Counsellor of Embassy at Washington, 1919-20; at Paris, 1920; Assistant Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1921-4; Minister (later Ambassador) at Constantinople, 1924-5; Ambassador at Berlin, 1926-8; Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1928-30; Ambassador at Washington, 1930- .
M.	= Mr. (later First Viscount) Morley (of Blackburn)				Secretary of State for India, 1905-10, and March-May, 1911; Lord President of the Council, 1910-4; in charge of Foreign Office, July 1911, April 1913.
L. M.	= Mr. (later Sir) Louis Mallet	...	...	...	Assistant Clerk in Foreign Office, 1902-5; Private Secretary to Sir E. Grey, 1905-6; Senior Clerk, 1906-7; Assistant Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1907-13; Ambassador at Constantinople, 1913-4.

R. P. M.	= Mr. R. P. Maxwell	...	...	Private Secretary to Sir T. H. Sanderson, 1894-6; Assistant Clerk in Foreign Office, 1896-1902, Senior Clerk, 1902-13.
A. N.	= Sir Arthur Nicolson (later First Baron Carnock)			Ambassador at Madrid, 1905-6; at St. Petersburg, 1906-10; British Representative at the Algeciras Conference on Affairs of Morocco, 1906; Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1910-6.
H. N.	= Mr. H. C. Norman	..	...	2nd Secretary at St. Petersburg, 1903-6; employed in Foreign Office, 1906-14; 1st Secretary, 1907; Counsellor of Embassy at Buenos Aires, 1914-5 (sometimes <i>Chargé d'Affaires</i>); at Tôkiô, 1915-9.
L. O.	= Mr. (later Sir) Lancelot Oliphant	...		Clerk in Foreign Office, 1911-28; Acting Assistant Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1928-9; Assistant Under-Secretary, 1929- .
A. P.	= Mr. A. Parker	...	...	Clerk in Foreign Office, 1906-12; Assistant Clerk, 1912-7; Librarian, 1918-9.
R. G. V.	= Mr. (later Sir) Robert G. Vansittart...			2nd Secretary at Foreign Office, 1908; at Cairo, 1909-11; at Foreign Office, 1911-3; Junior Clerk, 1913-4; Assistant Clerk, 1914-20; Counsellor of Embassy, 1920; Assistant Secretary, 1920-8; Private Secretary to Lord Curzon, 1920-4; Assistant Under-Secretary of State, 1928-30; Permanent Under-Secretary, 1930- .

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Appendix.

OVERTURE OF TURKEY TO GREAT BRITAIN, JUNE 1913.

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CHAPTER LXXXIV.

ALBANIA 1913-14.

I.—SERVIA AND ALBANIA TO THE AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN ULTIMATUM OF OCTOBER 18, 1913.

No. 1.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 41257/14809/13/44.

Tel. (No. 327.)

Foreign Office, September 7, 1913, 3.30 P.M.

My information is to the effect that unless some form of government is set on foot soon there will be serious trouble in some parts of Albania, probably in the districts around Scutari at any rate.

Objection has been taken to any extended use of the international forces at Scutari, and H[is] M[ajesty's] Gov[ernment] have no interest in pressing that; indeed, our desire is to withdraw Admiral Burney and the British force as soon as the Powers agree that this can be done without causing inconvenience.

But this being so it is essential that the Commission of Control should get to Albania as soon as possible. The matter is not one that specially concerns H[is] M[ajesty's] Gov[ernment], but as things seem to be drifting to a condition in which the Powers may be confronted with serious internal trouble in Albania and a very tiresome situation, I think in the general interest the proceedings of the Commission of Control and the establishment of a gendarmerie should be expedited as much as possible, and there should be a more definite understanding as to when and how the international forces are to be withdrawn, if they are not to be of use for more than the bare occupation of Scutari itself.

I am ready to fall in with any policy that commends itself to other Powers or that they propose.

You should communicate substance to M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs].

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to St. Petersburg (No. 651); to Rome (No. 259); to Berlin (No. 325); to Vienna (No. 260). A copy was sent to the Admiralty, to be repeated to Vice-Admiral Burney marked "very confidential and for his own information only."]

[*ED. NOTE.*—The appointment of an International Commission for the Control of Albania was discussed repeatedly at the Meetings of Ambassadors held in London from December 1912 to August 1913. A full record of the proceedings at these meetings is given in *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II). The most important decisions on this matter were those of July 15, 1913 (*v. ibid.*, pp. 912-3, No. 1147), July 29 (pp. 942-3, *Ed. note*), and August 11 (p. 1063, *App. V*). For other references, *v. ibid.*, pp. 1113-6, *SUBJECT INDEX, sub ALBANIA*.

Although the terms upon which the Commission was to act were agreed on July 29, the Commission did not meet until October 16 (*v. infra*, p. 31, No. 39). It met at Valona. The British representative was Consul-General H. H. Lamb. (F.O. 48019/14809/13/44.) The work of the Commission is described in detail in the reports of the German representative, Consul-General Winckel, in *G.P.*, XXXVI (I), pp. 263-358, Chapter 279, B. *cp.* also E. P. Stickney: *Southern Albania and Northern Epirus in European International Affairs*, 1912-23 (Stanford University Press, California, 1926), which contains useful maps and bibliography. Both these and a chronological table are to be found in J. Swire: *Albania, The Rise of a Kingdom* (Williams & Norgate, 1929), which uses some manuscript material supplied by Prince William of Wied and his circle, and fully summarizes published material.]

No. 2.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾.

F.O. 41257/14809/13/44.

Tel. (No. 328.) Very Confidential. *Foreign Office, September 7, 1913, 3.30 p.m.*My telegram No. 327 to Paris.⁽²⁾

There seems to be a tendency at Vienna not to realise the risk of internal trouble in Albania and a reluctance to expedite anything that is proposed to prevent it,⁽³⁾ and I fear things may drift into difficulties in consequence.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Berlin (No. 326); to St Petersburg (No. 652).]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. infra*, pp. 11-2, No. 16, and *note* (2).]

No. 3.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 42184/42184/13/39.

(No. 155.)

Belgrade, D. September 7, 1913.

Sir,

R. September 15, 1913.

In my despatch No. 143 of the 15th ultimo,⁽²⁾ I had the honour to report that though public opinion here would generally welcome a betterment of Austro-Servian relations, it was considered that Austria's attitude both before and after the recent war did not hold out much hope in this direction.

I have subsequently learned that Monsieur Pashitch, prior to his departure for Marienbad on the 1st instant, caused it to be generally understood in political and journalistic circles that any advances on the part of Austria would meet with a favourable reception here.

At first sight this intimation of the Servian Premier gives the impression of constituting a continuation of the well worn Servian policy of oscillating between Austria and Russia, and of flirting with the one in order to make surer of the affection of the other; but a more probable explanation is that it was intended as a "ballon d'essai" to prepare the ground for a new Commercial Treaty with Austria for which negotiations may shortly begin in Vienna. I have it direct from Monsieur Spalaikovich that the Servian Government is anxious that this Treaty should be negotiated. Since the conclusion of the recent war a growing spirit of independence is becoming noticeable in this country. Serbia feels that she has, so to speak, attained her majority and that, having with the help of Roumania and Greece secured a fair promise of stability in Macedonia, she can pursue a national policy of her own. She is now passing through a phase of extreme self satisfaction; her own successes in the field are contrasted with the general failure of Austrian diplomacy; and the assurance that she has definitely asserted her right to due respect from the Hapsburg Monarchy makes her perhaps the more ready to negotiate with Austria, not as an inferior, but on equal terms.

It is this attitude of independence on the part of Serbia that makes it difficult to see at the present moment what course negotiations for a Treaty of Commerce will take, or what the attitude of Vienna will be. From conversations I have had at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, I gather the official standpoint here to be that Serbia having secured outlets for her trade elsewhere, Austria has, economically speaking, far more to gain from such a treaty than Serbia. On the other hand it is recognized

⁽¹⁾ [A copy of this despatch was sent to the Board of Trade on September 15, 1913.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II), pp. 986-7, No. 1241.]

how important it is on political grounds and for the furtherance of the great work of internal reorganization, that at least neighbourly relations should be established with Austria. Not much hope is expressed that Austria will consent to facilitate Servian imports of live stock in the measure which this country is at present in the mood to demand, and it is expected that a Treaty which did not contain some tangible *quid pro quo* elsewhere or which implied any continuance of economic subjection to Austria, would be very unpopular here.

I have been informed from a private source that M. Pashitch is meditating resigning his office on his return to Belgrade at the end of the present month, one reason given being that he feels he cannot consistently with his recent attitude father an Austro-phil policy, which would certainly arouse strong opposition in some quarters. Another reason given is that he wishes after the strain and stress of the last year to retire for a while from the turmoil of internal politics. In this event his place would probably be taken by a figurehead who would in turn retire when Monsieur Pashitch considered the time was ripe for him to return to office. A week ago there was already talk of a Ministerial crisis, but it took a minor form in the retirement of the Ministers of Agriculture and Justice. It is significant that one of the causes of the resignation of the former is said to have been his opposition to an Austro-phil policy.

It now remains to be seen whether Austria-Hungary will take advantage of the present psychologic moment to improve her relations with Servia, or whether she will persist in the attitude towards her Slav provinces which has hitherto made good relations impossible. One of the assurances given by Monsieur Pashitch prior to his departure was that it would not be part of Servia's policy to agitate in Bosnia. I imagine this assurance to have been quite genuine, as it is felt that any forward policy in this direction just now when the country is exhausted by war would be prejudicial to the chances of successful internal reorganisation. But the real difficulty seems to lie in the probability, to which allusion was made in my despatch No. 148 of the 25th ultimo,⁽³⁾ that, in the absence of any concessions to their aspirations within the Dual Monarchy, the Austro-Hungarian South Slavs will be more and more irresistibly drawn towards a greater democratic Servia, and that the agitation which Austria apprehends will arise not from without but from within.

Finally, in considering the prospects of a betterment of Austro-Servian relations the fact should not be lost sight of that the situation in Albania contains elements of very serious friction with which I am dealing in a separate despatch.⁽⁴⁾

I have, &c.

DAYRELL CRACKANTHORPE.

⁽³⁾ [*v. ibid.*, pp. 997-8, No. 1252.]

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. infra*, pp. 5-6, No. 6.]

No. 4.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Belgrade, September 9, 1913.

F.O. 41565/30271/13/44.

D. 3 P.M.

Tel. (No. 203.)

R. 6.15 P.M.

Your telegram No. 121 of Sept[ember] 5⁽²⁾: Evacuation of Oroshi.

I am told officially Servian troops have evacuated Oroshi, but are holding strategic heights to the immediate south and to the north-east of that town.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Consul-General Lamb.]

⁽²⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 121) of September 5, 1913, D. 6 P.M., repeated a report from Count Mensdorff on September 5, that Servian troops were still at Oroshi on August 30, and that Count Berchtold considered it advisable that the Powers should again demand their withdrawal. (F.O. 41003/30271/13/44.) *cp. infra*, p. 6, No. 7.]

Servian Government promises to withdraw troops across the frontier when delimited, but it is noteworthy that the line they now occupy is precisely that of watershed between the Black Drin and the Fandivogel, which has been claimed as a natural frontier.

(Sent to British admiral at Scutari.)

No. 5.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 42185/31950/13/44.

(No. 156.) Confidential.

Sir,

Belgrade, D. September 9, 1913.

R. September 15, 1913.

As I had the honour to report in my Telegram No. 201 of the 3rd instant,⁽¹⁾ the frontier negotiations between Montenegro and Servia which have been conducted in Belgrade, have reached a deadlock.

I have now been informed confidentially that the choice of two alternative offers was given by the Servian Government to the Montenegrin Delegates.

These offers were :—

1. A line including Plevlje, Ipek and Djakova, but excluding the rich Metoja plain which extends from Ipek to Prizrend and to the East of Djakova.
2. Ipek, Djakova and half the Metoja plain, but excluding Plevlje.

The Montenegrin Delegates had however instructions to claim Plevlje, Ipek and Djakova and the entire Metoja plain. Hence the deadlock.

The Montenegrin Delegates have now all left Belgrade, but it is hoped that when they arrive at Cetinje and report personally to His Majesty the way may be paved for a renewal of negotiations.

Under the Serbo-Montenegrin Treaty signed last year the frontier question was in the last resort reserved for the arbitration of the Kings of Greece and Bulgaria.⁽²⁾ I am informed at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs that the arbitration of King Ferdinand being now inadmissible, the Servian Government would be willing to accept the King of Roumania as joint arbitrator, should Montenegro still desire two arbitrators. A strong current of opinion is however noticeable in the Belgrade press in favour of arbitration if ultimately resorted to, by delegates from the two Skupshtinas. The misunderstanding that has arisen on the frontier question between the two Kingdoms, following as it does immediately after the war with Bulgaria, is much deprecated, as calculated to prejudice Servia in the eyes of Europe.

I gather that King Nikolas is directly responsible for the difficulties that have arisen, and I am informed in confidence that the excessive claims put forward by Montenegro are intended really as makeweight for a pecuniary compensation, which would presumably find its way into the Royal pockets. It appears that the Metoja plain is rich in minerals and natural resources, and that King Nikolas has staked out, so to speak, a claim which he is however ready to waive if it is made worth his while. Privately I hear on the highest authority that His Majesty is quite content with the Servian offer as satisfying Montenegrin, as distinct from the Royal, requirements.

The official attitude here towards His Majesty is that a certain measure of complaisance must be shown him in view of the family ties that bind him with Italy and Russia, but the Royal demise is openly looked forward to as likely to facilitate a fusion of the two kingdoms.

I have, &c.

DAYRELL CRACKANTHORPE.

⁽¹⁾ [Mr. Crackanthorpe's telegram (No. 201) of September 3, 1913, D. 3-40 P.M., R. 6 P.M., is not reproduced as the contents are sufficiently indicated above. (F.O. 40719/31950/13/44.)]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. Gooch & Temperley, Vol. IX (II), p. 1006, App. II.*]

MINUTE.

We have now been told that the King of Roumania will decline to be an arbiter.⁽³⁾

A. N.
Sept[ember] 15, 1913
E. A. C.
Sept[ember] 16.

⁽³⁾ [Mr. C. Barclay's telegram (No. 179) of September 9, 1913, D. 7 P.M., R. 9 P.M., gave this information. (F.O. 41566/31950/13/44.)]

No. 6.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 42187/30271/13/44.

(No. 159.)

Sir,

Belgrade, D. September 10, 1913.

R. September 15, 1913.

I have the honour to transmit herewith copies of two despatches⁽¹⁾ as marked in the margin which I have received from His Majesty's Vice Consul at Uscub relative to affairs in Albania.

I transmit at the same time the telegrams⁽¹⁾ (reference to which is made in the above despatches) exchanged between this Legation and His Majesty's Vice Consulate in regard to the rumoured attack on the Servians by Isa Bolatin.

The situation is exceedingly involved and in order to understand the apparent contradictions in Servian policy towards Albania the following facts must be grasped:—(1) that no unity of action exists among the Albanian tribes, (2) that they are open to bribes from any and all sources and (3) that while some of these tribes have been won over to Servia others have not.

The basis of Servian policy is to establish the fact that the new Principality cannot possibly become "viable" and to encourage centrifugal tendencies for this purpose. This policy is of necessity opportunist as to its methods, and these methods therefore differ according to individual local situations and to the attitude of different tribes. On the one hand a successful policy of conciliation has been adopted towards the Mirdites, as a consequence of which Servian troops are able to be retained on the strategic heights near Oroshi without arousing hostility. On the other hand it seems not unlikely that Servia is herself provoking incursions of other hostile tribes by a policy of pin pricks, and with a view to seeking, primarily an excuse for the retention of her troops within the limits of Albania, and perhaps ultimately justification for an advance in order to restore tranquility. Austrian propaganda is of course another element of disturbance and adds to the general confusion. I hear in this connection that modern Austrian rifles have been taken in considerable quantities from Albanian prisoners during recent encounters.

At the same time the Servian Government is doubtless rigidly enforcing its system of administration within its own borders, and hence trouble such as is indicated in Mr. Peckham's despatches is bound to occur.

I do not think that the Servian Government is quite so ignorant of the Albanian population as Mr. Peckham would suggest.

I am sending copy of this despatch to His Majesty's Vice Consul at Uscub by safe opportunity.

I have, &c.

DAYRELL CRACKANTHORPE.

P.S.—A somewhat significant article has appeared in the "Politica" (a paper of independent views but which is often inspired by the Foreign Office) of to-day, which after pointing out that Europe, by creating an autonomous Albania, has succeeded in providing a fresh element of disturbance in the Balkans, states that Servia cannot

⁽¹⁾ [These enclosures are not reproduced.]

possibly allow things to go on as they are and must put a stop to continued Albanian incursions. It proceeds to point out that as it was Europe who created Albania it is her duty now to see that order is maintained and thus assure a peaceful life to the neighbouring States. If Europe however is not willing or prepared to do this, then Serbia will be obliged to send a punitive expedition into the new Principality. It is the duty of the Servian Government to make representations in this sense to Europe. Should Europe succeed in quieting the Albanian brigands, and out of Albania creating a State, Serbia will be only too willing to assist this State in her development.

D. C.

[*ED. NOTE.*—Count Trauttmansdorff, the Austro-Hungarian *Chargé d'Affaires*, made a verbal communication to the British Foreign Office on September 12, referring to the Servian evacuation of Oroshi, and urging that Serbia should be pressed further to transfer her forces elsewhere. (F.O. 42508/30271/13/44.) *cp. O.-U.A.*, VII, p. 289, No. 8608. The immediately succeeding telegram was the result of this communication.]

No. 7.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Crackanthorpe.

F.O. 42508/30271/13/44.

Tel. (No. 123.)

Foreign Office, September 12, 1913, 5.15 P.M.

Your tel[egram] No 208⁽¹⁾

You are authorized to associate yourself with your colleagues, if all are similarly instructed, in pressing Servian Gov[ernmen]t to order immediate withdrawal of Servian forces behind frontier as fixed at ambassadors' conference in London, which has been formally accepted in note recently communicated by Servian legation here notifying new Servian boundaries.⁽²⁾

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, pp 3-4, No. 4]

⁽²⁾ [This note was communicated by M. Gruic on September 9. (F.O. 41775/31950/13/44)]

No. 8.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 42190/24992/13/44.

(No. 162.)

Belgrade, D. September 12, 1913.

Sir,

R. September 15, 1913.

When I saw Monsieur Spalaikovitch yesterday morning he appeared to be somewhat agitated at a despatch he had received from the Servian Minister in Rome reporting that the Italian Government was proposing to send a detachment of soldiers to escort the North Albanian boundary Commission,⁽¹⁾ and had approached the Austrian Government as to whether it would not send an equal number. The despatch said that it was not proposed to send a similar escort with the Southern Albanian Boundary Commission⁽¹⁾ as Greek troops were already on the spot, but apparently it was held that there were no Servian troops in North Albania.

⁽¹⁾ [*v. immediately succeeding Ed. note*]

The line M. Spalaikovitch took in mentioning this matter to me was that it was surely for all the Powers, and not for one or two of them separately, to send the necessary escort on an international basis. I told His Excellency that I had no doubt the Powers would themselves arrive at an entirely satisfactory understanding on this point.

I have reported this conversation because M. Spalaikovitch evidently attached more importance to the matter than its face value appears to warrant.

I can only suppose that he fears either collisions between an Austro-Italian escort and the Servian troops still stationed in North Albania, or that influence may be brought to bear on the tribes prejudicial to Servian interests, or that Austro-Italian troops once in North Albania may not be withdrawn and may eventually be increased.

I have, &c.

DAYRELL CRACKANTHORPE.

MINUTE.

We have heard of a proposal to send an Italian escort with the commission for the delimitation of the Southern Albanian frontier, but never with that for the Northern, and even that rumour was denied at Rome.

H N.

Sept[ember] 15, 1913.

E. A. C.

Sept[ember] 16

E. G.

[*ED. NOTE.*—The Commission for the Delimitation of the North and North-East frontier of Albania was appointed as the result of decisions taken at the Meetings of Ambassadors held in London on May 26, 1913 (*v. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II), p. 815, No. 1002), and July 7 (*v. ibid.*, p. 892, No. 1120). For further references to the genesis of the Commission, *v. ibid.*, p. 1116, SUBJECT INDEX, *sub* ALBANIA. The British representative was Colonel E. J. Granet. It was originally intended that the Commission should meet on August 1, at latest, but the first meeting did not in fact take place until September 23, at Scutari (F.O. 45763/24992/13/44.) The Commission moved to Lake Ochrida on October 14. (F.O. 46947/24992/13/44.)

The appointment of the Southern Albanian Boundary Commission was also discussed on several occasions at the Meetings of Ambassadors in London, the most important Meetings from this standpoint being those of August 8 and 11 (*v. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II), pp. 969-70, No. 1223; pp. 975-6, No. 1226; pp. 1065-6, *app.* V. For other references, *v. ibid.*, p. 1116, SUBJECT INDEX, *sub* ALBANIA). This Commission held its first meeting on October 4, at Monastir, the British representative being Lieutenant-Colonel M. Doughty-Wylie (F.O. 47173/13799/13/44).

The German account of the working of the two frontier Commissions is given in *G.F., XXXVI* (I), pp. 131-260, Chapter 279, A.]

No. 9.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edvard Grey.

Belgrade, September 13, 1913.

F.O. 42116/30271/13/44.

Tel. (No. 207.)

D. 4 P.M.

R. 8.40 P.M.

Your telegram No. 123 of Sept[ember] 12⁽¹⁾: Evacuation of Albania.

My Russian colleague has as yet only instructions to give advice to Servian Government, which he did yesterday. Reply was usual one of fear of tribal incursions and necessity of guarding frontier. My Austrian and Italian colleagues wished, notwithstanding, to repeat representations immediately, but pending further instruc-

(¹) [*v. supra*, p. 6, No. 7.]

tions I disadvised this as prejudicial to harmony, and therefore possessing little value in present mood of Servian Government unless Russia were formally associated.

Austrian Chargé d'Affaires had a rather heated interview with Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs this morning. Latter accused Austria of stirring up Europe against Servia, and finally suggested that the best way out of difficulty would be for Austria to cede hinterland of Dibra and Djakova, and so guarantee content and economic welfare of the neighbouring tribes. Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs had previously denied to Italian Chargé d'Affaires any political motive for retention of troops. Austrian Chargé d'Affaires tells me that up to to-day Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs has appeared generally desirous of improving Austro-Servian relations.

I found Acting Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs quite bellicose on the subject this morning. He said that if the Powers, after creating Albania, could not police her and prevent her attacking her neighbours Servia would have to do so (see my despatch No. 159 sent by bag).⁽²⁾ Servia had not the slightest fear of Austria if the latter wanted to pick a quarrel.

(²) [*v. supra*, pp. 5-6, No. 6]

No. 10.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.

Belgrade, September 16, 1913.

F.O. 42481/30271/13/44.

D. 8 A.M.

Tel. (No. 209.)

R. 9 A.M.

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs has just informed me that orders have been sent to withdraw troops to the east bank of the Black Drin River. Their retention there must, however, depend on attitude of tribes.

Wiser counsels evidently prevail owing to desire not to flout opinion of Europe. Troops are still within frontier of Albania as drawn at the Ambassadors' Conference, but I am assured that final delimitation will be respected.

(Repeated to admiral at Scutari.)

No. 11.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 42966/30271/13/44.

Belgrade, D. September 19, 1913.

Tel. (No. 213.) Very Confidential.

R. September 20, 1913.

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs has just informed me privately that the Servian representatives at various capitals have to-day been instructed to explain fully the situation in Albania. They will state that the Servian troops are being gradually withdrawn to the frontier fixed at London, and the entire evacuation will be completed as soon as the safety of the frontier is assured. But it will be pointed out that the situation in Servian territory outside the frontier is very serious, and that an insurrectionary movement has started among the Arnauts, who are being incited by tribes across the Albanian border and are being supplied with arms. It has therefore become necessary to close entirely the Albanian frontier, and to reinforce the Servian garrisons along that frontier. Further, should circumstances and the protection of

(¹) [This telegram was sent to Paris (as No. 338); to Rome (as No. 248); to Berlin (as No. 333); to Vienna (as No. 271); to St. Petersburg (as No. 665).]

national interests render it necessary, the Servian Government will be compelled not only to reinforce their troops still within the Albanian frontier, but to push these troops forward in order to restore order.

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs proceeded to tell me in strict confidence that other news of a very serious character had reached him. First, that several Bulgarian staff officers were at Vallona and Durazzo with the mission to incite the Albanians against the Servians; secondly, that Austria was facilitating for Bulgaria the purchase of guns and ammunition by means of deferred payments; and thirdly, that two Bulgarian divisions had not yet been demobilised. He asked me to put these facts together, to add to them the forthcoming conclusion of the Turco-Bulgarian negotiations, and to find for myself the logical conclusion. I asked whether his Excellency seriously wished me to believe that Bulgaria in her present crippled condition might start on a fresh adventure. He said that he greatly feared that those now guiding Bulgarian politics, especially General Savof, were, in fact, adventurers of a very dangerous type. He said that it was his conviction that Austria and Bulgaria were bent on placing every obstacle in the way of Servia's ultimate consolidation. He hoped I would transmit to you the main points of our conversation.⁽²⁾

(Repeated to Sophia.)

⁽²⁾ [The text given above is taken from the *Confidential Print*, as the original decypher cannot be traced.]

No. 12.

Communication from M. Gruic.

Légation Royale de Serbie, Londres,

F.O. 48076/30271/18/44.

le 6/19 Septembre 1913.

La Serbie avait commencé à retirer de l'Albanie les restes des troupes qui y étaient encore restées uniquement pour empêcher d'une manière sûre et efficace les irruptions des Albanais sur le territoire serbe jusqu'à l'organisation en Albanie des autorités chargées de maintenir l'ordre.

En attendant, des désordres très graves se produisent tout le long de la frontière. Les Albanais, en masses, attaquent l'armée et les autorités serbes. Le Gouvernement Royal est informé, de source certaine, qu'on prépare et organise une grande incursion de bandes albanaises sur le territoire serbe et que du côté albanais on fait tout son possible pour engager aussi dans ces désordres les Albanais qui vivent sur le territoire serbe et qui jusqu'à présent étaient restés tranquilles.

Le Gouvernement serbe ne peut tolérer cette anarchie qui augmente de jour en jour et est fermement résolu : à défendre aux Albanais de passer sur le territoire et les marchés serbes—jusqu'au rétablissement de l'état normal et l'abandon par les Albanais de leur attitude hostile envers les autorités serbes.

En outre, la Serbie repoussera toute attaque par la force; et, si ces désordres prennent des proportions encore plus considérables, elle ordonnera à ses troupes de réoccuper certaines positions stratégiques, sur territoire albanais, qui sont indispensables pour garantir la frontière serbe contre ces incursions.

La Serbie demandera aussi à l'Albanie de l'indemniser pour les dommages causés et les frais occasionnés par un pareil état de choses.

MINUTES.

The Servian Chargé d'Affaires handed this memorandum to me yesterday and asked whether I would give him any message to transmit to his government.

I said I must refer this rather grave communication to Sir E. Grey. I could only express a personal opinion based on a first impression.

It seemed to me that the Servian government were assuming a serious responsibility (1) in refusing access to the markets which had been specially declared by the Powers to remain open to them and (2) in threatening an armed invasion of Albanian territory. It was not for me to express an opinion on the value of the evidence on which the Servian government declared they were going to be attacked in force. But it would require the clearest evidence to convince the Powers that a pretext was not being sought for a Servian occupation of the Albanian frontier districts. I could therefore only hope that the Servian government would exercise the greatest prudence and moderation so as to avoid all risk of being charged with having contributed by precipitate action to bringing about a general state of disorder and disturbance in Albania.

E. A. C.
Sept[ember] 20.

An excellent answer.

E G.

No. 13.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.

Belgrade, September 21, 1913.

F.O. 48143/30271/13/44.

D. 3 P.M.

Tel. (No. 214.)

R. 5 P.M.

I learn from a private source that the Servian troops withdrawn across Black Drin received orders on Friday to reoccupy points previously held, and that positions on east bank of the Drin have been in turn occupied by troops from Prisrend and Brod. All garrisons on Servian frontier have been reinforced.

I am informed that an understanding exists between Servia and Montenegro by which joint efforts are to be made to acquire Black Drin frontier for Servia and an extended frontier for Montenegro, to include Klementi, Streli, and Kastrati, by working up the situation.

Further information reaches me that Servian Government is treating with Essad Pasha for his support in frontier question.

(Repeated to Cetinje and Scutari.)

No. 14.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 48476/26171/13/44.

Tel. (No. 340.)

Foreign Office, September 22, 1913, 6 P.M.

Indications all point to increasing instability in Albania that must lead to eventually and may at any moment precipitate serious troubles in Albania itself and complications on the frontier. No steps whatever are being taken to improve matters. There are signs that the local authorities are being disintegrated and the Commission whose function was to be to advise the Powers and pending a definitive Gov[ernment] to exercise control over the native authorities⁽²⁾ (as agreed in § 7 of the formula adopted by the Powers on July 29⁽³⁾) cannot get to work because the Austrian member of it has not yet been appointed; objection is taken to any extended use of the Admirals and the international force at Scutari. The position of the latter under these circ[umstance]s is scarcely dignified; they are kept inactive and no preparation is

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Berlin (No. 335); to Vienna (No. 272); to St. Petersburg (No. 666); to Rome (No. 269). A copy was sent to the Admiralty on September 23, "to be telegraphed to Admiral Burney for his confidential information only."]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 1, *Ed. note.*]

⁽³⁾ [v. *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II), p. 943, *Ed. note.*]

being made to enable them to hand over their limited functions to any other authority. H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] stated some time ago that they c[oul]d not keep Adm[iral] Burney at Scutari indefinitely and unless there is some prospect of making progress with the Comm[issio]n they will feel obliged to withdraw Ad[miral] Burney and the whole of the British force without further delay.⁽¹⁾

You sh[oul]d impress upon M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] the serious view that we take of the situation. The Comm[ission], if on the spot w[oul]d be able to communicate with Albanian local authorities, to stimulate, to control and to advise them. At present there is no one who can even communicate with them, and it does not seem fair to the Admirals and the international force at Scutari to keep them there as spectators of increasing trouble, which they are not allowed to prevent even in the neighbourhood of Scutari and for which their presence can be no remedy. Such at any rate is the view we take as regards Admiral Burney and the British Force.

⁽¹⁾ [For Vice-Admiral Sir Cecil Burney's position at Scutari, v. *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II), p. 786, *Ed. note*]

No. 15.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.

Belgrade, September 23, 1913.

F.O. 43538/30271/13/44.

D. 1.30 P.M.

Tel. (No. 218.)

R. 3.30 P.M.

My telegram No. 217 of Sept[ember] 22.⁽¹⁾

I am informed at Ministry for Foreign Affairs that strong Albanian force has attacked and captured Dibra and is now moving in detachments towards Krushewo. It is expected that Servian troops destined for offensive action will reach Albanian frontier in from 3 to 5 days. Servian force will then probably advance to consolidate position on strategical points within the frontier and claim desired hinterland as compensation for restoring tranquillity.

(The above repeated to Admiral at Scutari.)

It appears to me serious tension between Austria and Servia can only be avoided in one of two ways: either by the Powers, if bent on maintaining the frontier fixed at London sending international force numerically sufficient to protect that frontier until gendarmerie is organized, or by Austria consenting to meet Servian view that present frontier is inadequate.

The situation is becoming serious and demands immediate consideration.

⁽¹⁾ [Mr. Crackanthorpe's telegram (No. 217) of September 22, D. 6.58 P.M., R. 11.15 P.M., reported that the withdrawal of Servian troops across the Black Drin was followed by an Albanian attack, and that the Servian Government were contemplating extensive military operations. (F.O. 43405/30271/13/44.)]

No. 16.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.

St. Petersburg, September 23, 1913.

F.O. 43544/14809/13/44.

D. 9.30 P.M.

Tel. (No. 340.)

R. 10 P.M.

Your telegram No. 340 of Sept[ember] 22⁽¹⁾ to Paris.

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs entirely shares your view as to the gravity of situation. He considers attitude of Austria suspicious. While making constant

⁽¹⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 10-1, No. 14.]

representations to Servia, with a view to withdrawal of Servian troops from Albanian territory, and while affecting to regard state of things in Albania as normal, Austrian Government have deliberately deferred appointment of their delegate on Commission of Control,⁽²⁾ and Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs believes that they desire to see increase of disorder in Albania. He does not believe that Austria actually wishes for pretext to send troops to Albania, but he suggested that she might use present opportunity to adopt more peremptory tone towards Servia in regard to various questions pending between them.

He thought it might be desirable that different Powers should speak at Vienna as to the necessity of expediting the (? commencement of) work by Commission, and he stated that he was prepared to say something in that sense to Austrian Government. He was especially desirous of being informed of the reply which you received from Austrian Government to your present communication.

As to the Russian commissioner, he could start very shortly if desired.

MINUTES

§ We have already spoken at Vienna in the sense of the passage marked as we have elsewhere. We might tell the Russian Gov[ernmen]t that we did so and *what the reply was.

H. N.

Sep[tembe]r 24, 1913.

§ Tel. No. 266 to Vienna.⁽²⁾

* Tel. No 140 from Vienna.⁽²⁾

R. P. M.

Sept[ember] 24/13.

The reply was only provisional, on the part of one of the officials in the Vienna Foreign Office. We may hope to have Count Berchtold's own definite answer to our last communication before long. That is what the Russian Gov[ernmen]t ask for.

Qu[ery]: Wait for it.

E. A. C.

Sept[ember] 24.

A. N.

E. G.

⁽²⁾ [Repeated instructions were sent on September 13 to Sir F. Cartwright by telegram (No. 266), D. 4.15 p.m., pressing for a reply as to the delay in appointing an Austro-Hungarian representative (F.O. 41559/14809/13/44). Sir F. Cartwright's telegram (No. 140) of September 17, D. 11.50 a.m., R. 12.50 p.m., gave Count Berchtold's reply. There was no desire for delay in Albania, but there was difficulty in finding a suitable representative. (F.O. 42690/14809/13/44.)]

No. 17.

Sir F. Cartwright to Sir Edward Grey.

Vienna, September 24, 1913.

F.O. 43695/30271/13/44.

Tel. (No. 145.)

Servia and Albania.

D. 1.30 p.m.

R. 3.20 p.m.

Count Berchtold has informed me that the Servian Minister here yesterday lodged a complaint with him with regard to Albanians along the frontier. The Servian Minister seems to have hinted that Servia might see herself compelled to restore order there by herself. M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] replied that his Consular Agents at Prisrend and elsewhere had not reported to him existence of any serious movement among the Albanians, but that much discontent existed among the frontier Albanians at being prevented from visiting the market-towns of Prisrend, Dibra and Djakova. This was the great grievance to them as they derived much of their material comforts from those centres.

H[is] E[xcellency] told me that he was convinced that Serbia desired to raise trouble along the frontier with a view to intervention by her in Albania, and that, should this prove to be the case very serious situation would arise, to which Austria-Hungary could not remain indifferent. H[is] E[xcellency] repeated to me what I reported in a previous telegram,⁽¹⁾ that diplomatic representations to Belgrade would be ineffectual unless Russia should be sincerely desirous of restraining Serbia and gave categorical instructions to her Representative at Belgrade to speak in that sense.

(¹) [Sir F. Cartwright's telegram (No. 143) of September 22, 1913, D 6-40 P.M., R 10-30 P.M., is not reproduced as the contents are sufficiently indicated above. (F O. 43408/30271/13/44)]

No. 18.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Belgrade, September 24, 1913.

F.O. 43704/30271/13/44.

D. 3-30 P.M.

Tel. (No. 219.)

R. 11 P.M.

Following items of information reached me this morning from private sources:—

Arrangements are being made with Greek Government not to demobilise until situation in Albania is clear. General mobilisation is being considered here. Mobilisation of one division will probably be announced to-day. Two further divisions are being secretly mobilised. Ten trains of infantry, with ammunition and provisions, left Belgrade yesterday. All officers on leave have received telegraphic orders to report for duty. Servian troops are to be sent to Bosnian and Bulgarian frontiers as measure of precaution in view of belief here that there is connivance between Austria and Bulgaria in Albanian uprising.

Greek troops are to be moved to Bulgarian and Albanian frontiers; arrangements are being made for their transport viâ Salonica and Monastir. Albanians are now marching on Struga, Krushevo, Djakova, and Ipek. Servians have been driven back all along frontier line. There is a report, at present unconfirmed, that Djakova has fallen. Constant telegraphic communication between Ministry for Foreign Affairs (group omitted: ? and) Cetinje.

Above reported to admiral at Scutari.

(Secret.)

I have reason to believe that Servian Government is approaching Roumania with a view to mobilisation of latter in case of Austrian mobilisation.

(Sent to Athens, Bucharest, Cetinje, and Sophia.)

(¹) [This telegram was sent to Paris (as No. 342); to Rome (as No. 273); to Berlin (as No. 337); to Vienna (as No. 274); to St. Petersburg (as No. 669).]

No. 19.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Belgrade, September 24, 1913.

F.O. 43705/30271/13/44.

D. 3-30 P.M.

Tel. (No. 220.)

R. 10 P.M.

My immediately preceding telegram.⁽²⁾

Russian Chargé d'Affaires had lengthy interview with Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs yesterday. He urged, under instructions, necessity of prudence. I gathered

(¹) [This telegram was sent to Paris (as No. 343); to Rome (as No. 274); to Berlin (as No. 338); to Vienna (as No. 275); to St. Petersburg (as No. 670).]

(²) [v. immediately preceding document.]

that Russian Chargé's advice had little effect. He says he considers Serbia is now in exceptionally advantageous position. Should Austria attack her, he thinks Roumania would march into Transylvania. Bulgaria is helpless, and Greek and Servian interests in Albania are identical.

He thinks that unless situation in Albania is taken actively in hand, Servians may not stop at Drin frontier, but will march to coast under pretext of restoring order. (Repeated to Bucharest.)

No. 20.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 44249/30271/13/44.

(No. 168.) Very Confidential.

Belgrade, D. September 25, 1913.

Sir,

R. September 29, 1913.

Since writing my despatches Nos. 159 and 162 of the 9th⁽²⁾ and 12th instant⁽³⁾ respectively, which were the last I had the honour to address to you on the subject of Albania, events have moved with great and indeed with somewhat alarming rapidity. I have endeavoured to keep you fully informed of developments by telegraph, for which purpose I have been utilizing private as well as official sources of information.

It will probably be difficult ever to arrive at the exact truth concerning the specific causes which led to the present Albanian attack on Servian territory. But the nearest approach to the truth seems to lie midway between the contradictory accounts emanating from the Austrian and the Servian sides, and I will therefore outline briefly these very conflicting statements.

According to the Austrian version the Servians have deliberately provoked an Albanian uprising and attack; (1) by not withdrawing their troops from Albania, (2) by massacring and maltreating in various ways the Albanians within Servian territory and (3) by closing their frontier and the access to the market towns, and thus practically reducing the tribes inside the Albanian frontier to starvation.

The Servian answer to the above takes the following form:

(1) That it was indispensable to retain Servian troops within Albania and in possession of the strategic positions, pending the delimitation of the frontier, in order to protect Servian territory from attacks on the part of the Albanians, and in the absence of any organized police force within Albania itself. The proof of this, the Servians say, lies in the fact that as soon as their troops were withdrawn across the Black Drin in compliance with the representations of the Powers, these attacks took place.

(2) That the Albanians within Servian territory were deliberately incited to rebel by the tribes from across the frontier, acting on foreign instigation, and that repressive and precautionary measures accordingly became necessary; and (3) that one of these precautionary measures naturally took the form of closing the frontier.

A calm consideration of these contentions points to the conclusion which I indicated in my despatch No. 159 of September 9,⁽²⁾ that, while Serbia has been doubtless endeavouring to work up a situation which she calculates may assist her to obtain the frontier she desires, and which she feels is a necessity for her, Austrian influence has at the same time been at work to stir up the tribes against Serbia, partly with a view to forcing her to evacuate Albania, and partly with a view to creating for

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet. A copy was sent to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 5-6, No. 6.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 6-7, No. 8.]

her difficulties on her Albanian frontier and generally impeding her work of consolidation. This appears to be supported by the fact that Mannlicher rifles of modern type have been recently taken in considerable quantities from the Albanians. Further I am informed at the Ministry of War that the organized and concerted attack made by the Albanians a few days ago and skilfully directed towards those points of the frontier where Servian detachments were the weakest, indicates that it must have been directed by trained foreign officers, who are indeed supposed to be Austrian and Bulgarian. I am privately informed that a price has been practically set on the heads of any Austrian and Bulgarian officers who may be taken prisoners, the desire being to obtain irrefutable proof of Austrian and Bulgarian connivance in the Albanian movement.

The Servians evidently feel themselves just now in a particularly advantageous position for the pursuit of their Albanian policy. They can easily send down, and, in fact are sending down, a sufficiently powerful force to cope with the Albanians, drive them back across the frontier and retake and consolidate themselves on the strategic positions on the watershed between the Black Drin and the Fanivogel, to the immediate South East and North East of Oroshi. Unlike Bulgaria, before the recent war, Serbia seems to have secured a reasonably safe position elsewhere. She has, as I had the honour to inform you in my Telegram No. 205 of September 11,⁽⁴⁾ obtained guarantees from Roumania against Bulgaria, though it is doubtful how far Roumania would be prepared to give effect to such guarantees in the event of a Servian adventure in Albania in which country Roumania has no direct interest; in her Albanian policy Serbia has a wholehearted ally in Greece with whom she has come to an understanding as to future spheres of influence in Albania, as reported in my despatch No. 160 Confidential of September 11.⁽⁵⁾ She may count on Montenegro making a small but perhaps useful diversion in the North, and I have reason to believe that the two countries have in fact come to a mutual arrangement as to their future Albanian frontier, as reported in my telegram No. 214 of the 21st instant.⁽⁶⁾ Further, Serbia appears to believe that should she be attacked by Austria, Roumania would not remain quiet, but would march into Transylvania, though how far this belief is justified I have no means of ascertaining. M. Spalaikovitch told me privately the day before yesterday that he had every reason to believe that Roumania's policy towards Austria had undergone a great alteration as a result of recent events in the Near East. Finally Serbia always counts, rightly or wrongly, on the disaffection of the Austro-Hungarian Slavs in the event of a war with Austria, and, last but not least [*sic*: least], on Russia's finally pulling the chestnuts out of the fire for her, should things go badly.

Vis-à-vis of the Powers, Serbia feels that, although she is running a serious risk of incurring their displeasure, her position is nevertheless a strong one. It is true that she is openly flouting them and ignoring the decisions of the Ambassadors' Conference, but she does not regard these decisions as irrevocable, and she believes that cogent proof is being now provided that the frontier fixed at London was, for her, an impossible one. She has in fact taken the bit between her teeth and once the Albanians driven back, and the Servian Army consolidated within Albania, a very delicate situation will arise and the danger of a second advance of the Servian Army to the Adriatic must not be lost sight of. As reported in my telegram No. 224 of today's date,⁽⁷⁾ I believe that the Servian Government is preparing a further note to the Powers stating that, in view of the failure of the latter to prevent the invasion and devastation of Servian territory by Albanians, of the extreme probability that these attacks will continue, and of the inadequacy of the frontier fixed at London to provide a proper safeguard against such attacks, the Servian Government feels compelled to

(4) [*v. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II), p. 1001, No. 1257.]

(5) [Mr. Crackanthorpe's despatch (No. 160), D. September 11, 1913, R. September 15, 1913, stated that the dividing line for the Greek and Servian spheres of influence in Albania should be the River Skumbi. (F.O. 42188/30271/13/44.)]

(6) [*v. supra*, p. 10, No. 13.]

(7) [Mr. Crackanthorpe's telegram (No. 224) of September 25, 1913, D. 12-30 P.M., R. 6-20 P.M., is not reproduced as the contents are sufficiently indicated above. (F.O. 43854/30271/13/44.)]

occupy permanently those strategic points in Albanian territory which can alone guarantee peace and security to Servian subjects. The Powers will then probably be asked to sanction an equitable revision of the Eastern and North Eastern frontiers of Albania.

Peace will then apparently depend on the attitude of Vienna. I believe the Servian view to be that the Austrian Government may possibly find itself forced to take action in view of the impossibility of defending a further diplomatic defeat before the Delegations, and the necessity of justifying the enormous military expenditure already incurred.

Faced with the contingency of Austrian action, the Servian Government is now considering the question of general mobilization. Orders have already been issued for the mobilization of the 1st Morava Division and I am told that the Drin and Danube Divisions are being mobilized. An official announcement confines itself to stating that the reserves have been called out for service within the old frontiers, and that for the defence of Servian territory against the Albanians the active Army will be employed. Finally a movement of troops is taking place towards both the Bosnian and Bulgarian frontiers.

I have, &c.

DAYRELL CRACKANTHORPE.

Copy sent to Vienna.

No. 21.

Lord Granville to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 44195/26171/13/44.

(No. 352.) Confidential.

Sir,

Berlin, D. September 26, 1913.

R. September 29, 1913.

I had the honour to report in my Confidential Telegram No. 164 of the 23rd instant,⁽²⁾ on the subject of the intention of His Majesty's Government to withdraw shortly their Admiral and troops from Scutari, that Herr von Jagow remarked to me in conversation that he happened to know that the Austrian Government were very anxious for the withdrawal of the Admirals at the earliest possible moment, partly because of various cases of friction that had arisen between the Austrian Admiral and Admiral Burney.⁽³⁾ I expressed surprise and said I had not known of such friction and Herr von Jagow said that the cases had been quite unimportant and that the Austrian Government had not complained of them, but only looked upon them as a special reason for not prolonging the Admirals' mandate longer than was absolutely necessary. I asked if he referred to the story that had been published about Admiral Burney's correspondence with Albanian chiefs and told him that I had seen the Admiral's report on the subject which showed that the colour given to the correspondence in the press was quite false.⁽⁴⁾ I had intended offering to read him the report at my next visit, but he obviously took no interest in the matter, admitted that that was one of the cases he meant but was quite ready to believe in Admiral Burney's complete innocence. He said the most important case was some trouble that was now going on about a bridge, but I see in the telegram sections that, according to Admiral Burney's report, the Austrian Admiral's quarrel seems to be more with his Italian than with his British colleague.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet. A copy was sent to Vienna.]

⁽²⁾ [Lord Granville's telegram (No. 164) of September 23, 1913, D. 7.40 P.M., R. 9.45 P.M., is not reproduced as the contents are sufficiently indicated above. (F.O. 43550/14809/13/44.)]

⁽³⁾ [v. immediately succeeding *Ed. note.*]

⁽⁴⁾ [The correspondence with the Albanian Chiefs, who had complained to Vice-Admiral Burney about the unsettled state of their country, was explained in his letter to the Admiralty of August 15, 1913, and the misunderstanding was apparently chiefly caused by a mistranslation afterwards repeated in the Press. (F.O. 39584/34425/13/44.)]

The announcement published in Paris that our troops were to be withdrawn immediately has been quoted in the German papers, some of whom have taken it as a sign of differences of opinion among the Powers and others as a proof that the Powers will not take any active steps to interfere in the Serbo-Albanian quarrel. The "Lokal-Anzeiger" last night published an article, which looked as if it had emanated from the Foreign Office, stating that the form in which that piece of news was published was apt to give a false impression. The British Government had merely announced "some time ago" that they did not intend to leave their troops in Scutari longer than was absolutely necessary. The publication of this intention by French sources at this particular moment gave one the impression of a desire to render more difficult a quiet judgment of a very complicated situation. The reasons which French papers gave for this alleged British step were untrue because there was not any dispute between the Powers on the question of the Serbo-Albanian conflict, and could not be, as the Cabinets had not yet entered into an exchange of views on the subject. "For the present it can only be looked upon as certain that a permanent occupation of Albanian territory by Servia will be as little permitted by the Powers as inroads of Albanian troops into Servian territory."

There was a Berlin telegram in last night's Cologne Gazette denying in much the same language the existence of any dispute between the Powers, saying that when the Powers did exchange views they would doubtless do so on the basis of the London decisions, and adding that the idea of interfering with Servia so long as she did nothing but protect the territory conferred on her by the Powers could obviously not be entertained.

This morning's "Lokal-Anzeiger" contained a further article, declaring that there was no ground for serious anxiety as the Albanian irregular forces could not be a match for Servian troops and Servia need not at present be suspected of having actively caused the troubles or of intending to make use of them to upset the decisions of the Powers about Albania. Much would depend on the attitude of Austria-Hungary, and it was to be hoped, in the interests of European quiet, that she would not consider herself impelled to another costly mobilisation before it was absolutely necessary, and there could be no question of that as yet.

I have, &c.

GRANVILLE.

[ED. NOTE.—The following is a summary account, compiled from British sources, of an incident connected with the Admirals' Commission at Scutari. *cp.* also *G.P.*, XXXVI (I), pp. 263–92, *passim*. Count Trauttmansdorff informed Sir Eyre Crowe on September 19 that he had a complaint to make about Vice-Admiral Burney's procedure regarding the allotment to an Italian firm of a contract to construct a bridge over the River Drin. The Austro-Hungarian Admiral had refused to vote without further instructions from his Government. (F.O. 44780/26171/13/44.) The Italian Admiral left Scutari on September 19 without giving a date for his return (F.O. 43135/26171/13/44), though this fact was not mentioned to Count Trauttmansdorff. He returned in time for the next meeting of the Commission on September 27. (F.O. 48606/26171/13/44.)

The question at issue was stated to have been whether the Admirals' Commission could decide on action to be taken by a majority vote of the members, as a diplomatic commission could usually make only unanimous decisions, and it was reported that the Austro-Hungarian Admiral had been instructed to attend no further meetings. It was feared that there might not be any way out of the difficulty without bringing the Commission to an end. (F.O. 44780/26171/13/44.)

An *Aide-Mémoire* on the subject was sent to Count Berchtold on October 9 by Sir F. Cartwright, under instructions from Sir Edward Grey, giving the reply of Vice-Admiral Burney (F.O. 47953/26171/13/44) in which further difficulties between the Austro-Hungarian and Italian Admirals were mentioned, and explaining that it would be impossible to continue the work of the Commission unless a majority vote of the members could be accepted, as otherwise one member alone might obstruct every step that had to be taken. Sir F. Cartwright was also instructed to inform Count Berchtold that His Majesty's Government considered that Vice-Admiral Burney's action in the circumstances was entirely justified. (F.O. 58527/26171/13/44.)

Vice-Admiral Burney had suggested first in July, and again later, with the consent of other members of the Commission, that it was unnecessary to keep so many senior officers at Scutari, as affairs could be satisfactorily administered by one of the Admirals or by junior officers (F.O. 31532/20810/13/44; 31844/20810/13/44.)

For reasons of space it is impossible to reproduce Admiral Burney's numerous reports on the condition of affairs at Scutari, or on the procedure adopted by the Austro-Hungarian Rear-Admiral Njegovan, and by his successor (on July 29) Rear-Admiral von Barry. There is a complete copy of the Minutes of the Meetings of the Commission administering Scutari from May 14–October 13, 1913. After September 15 Rear-Admiral von Barry did not attend the meetings, and after October 1 the German representative, Captain Biermann, did not sign the minutes, though it is noted in them that he was absent only from the last two meetings. From May 23 (inclusive), the 13th Meeting, the names of the officers who signed the minutes are reproduced, but not earlier. (F.O. 48606/26171/13/44.) The Commission was dissolved after the meeting of October 13. On October 16 Vice-Admiral Burney was informed that he should regard the Admirals' Commission as being dissolved, as soon as his colleagues had been similarly instructed. The reason given was that the Commission of Control had come into operation (F.O. 47118/26171/13/44.) *cp. supra*, p. 1, *Id. note*.

The various members of the Admirals' Commission left Scutari on October 15, 17, 19. (F.O. 46878/26171/13/44; 47264/26171/13/44; 47287/26171/13/44) *cp. infra*, pp. 30–1, No. 35.]

No. 22.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.

St. Petersburg, September 27, 1913.

F.O. 44141/30271/13/44.

D. 8.15 P.M.

Tel. (No. 342.)

R. 9.45 P.M.

Servia and Albania.

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs is informed from Belgrade that Servia intends to inflict a severe lesson on Albania, for which purpose Servian troops will cross frontier. He understands that after the operations against the Albanian forces have been carried out Servia will continue to hold some positions within Albania. He has informed Servian Government that he appreciates good reasons which they have for proposed actions. At the same time he has recommended them to proceed with the same prudence that they have shown hitherto.

He is aware that Servian action is likely to give rise to objections from Austrian Government, but he considers that she is justified in taking precautionary measures against the recurrence of recent incidents.⁽¹⁾

⁽¹⁾ [*cp. infra*, pp. 20–1, No. 24.]

No. 23.

Sir F. Cartwright to Sir A. Nicolson.⁽¹⁾

Private.⁽²⁾

My dear Nicolson,

Vienna, September 27, 1913.

The sudden uprising of the Albanian tribes along the Servian frontier⁽³⁾ is causing much anxiety at the "Ballplatz," but it has come with little surprise there, as it has always been said here that trouble would come from the artificial frontier-line accepted by the London Conference for the Northern Albanian frontier. This line was accepted by Austria-Hungary as a concession to Russia, but Count Berchtold all along never hid from me his conviction that it was a political mistake, if the Powers really wished to restore peace in the Balkans, to cut off Dibra, Djakova, Ipek and Prisrend from the

⁽¹⁾ [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Prime Minister. The endorsement is initialled by Sir Edward Grey.]

⁽²⁾ [Carnock MSS., Vol. IX of 1913.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 14–6, No. 20.]

new State of Albania. By doing so the rural Albanian population who live on the Albanian side of the new frontier, have been cut off from their commercial centres and are, in a way, exposed to being starved out. According to trustworthy reports received here the Servian authorities have behaved with unspeakable cruelty towards the Albanian population, and they have been doing all in their power to prevent the Albanians in Albania from carrying on their trade with places now on Servian territory. Serbia no doubt hopes that by making life intolerable to these people, she will force them little by little to start a movement for annexation to Serbia. The pressure brought to bear by Serbia on the Albanian population must have been very drastic, otherwise so extended an insurrectionary movement would not have taken place so suddenly. This movement seems to be of a spontaneous local character, and not to have been inspired by the Provisional Government at Valona, or by Essad Pasha.

The latest news from Belgrade sounds serious, and Serbia seems determined to mobilize her army again and probably to seize the opportunity to carry on a regular war against Albania. There are rumours however that the reservists are refusing wholesale to come out for a third Balkan war, and should this news prove true, it may have a restraining effect on the Servian Government. It is also said here in well-informed circles that Roumania is disinclined to take part in a new Balkan war, and that Germany will use her influence at Athens to keep Greece quiet. Austria-Hungary is, I see, accused by the Russian Press of having fomented the Albanian turmoil, but I think there is little justification for this accusation, and I feel sure that Count Berchtold desires nothing better for the present than that there should be peace and quiet in the Balkans, especially now that the Austrian reservists have been disbanded and the large bill for the mobilisation has to be met. The present flutter in Northern Albania has already had a depressing effect in Austrian financial circles, and I learn from the Director of the Laenderbank that it may upset the negotiations which he is carrying on with a group of French Banks for the purpose of obtaining their financial support for carrying out a vast undertaking here, the construction of the Vienna Underground Railway System. Nevertheless it must be remembered that in spite of the desire for peace which exists here, Count Berchtold may see himself compelled to take action should Serbia do more than push the Albanian insurgents back across the Albanian frontier. A Servian war, carried on on purely Albanian soil will, I think, be tolerated here with difficulty. The thing to do therefore is to make use of all possible pressure at Belgrade to make Serbia understand that she must not make war on Albania, while recognising her right to repress the Albanian rising within her territory. Count Berchtold has told me repeatedly that in his opinion no diplomatic pressure will carry much weight with the Servian Government unless Russia clearly makes it understood that she will stand no further trouble in the Balkans.

Count Berchtold continues to be attacked in the press and in society on account of what is called his indolence and inclination to allow matters to drift. It is recognized that he allows them to drift into a peaceful channel, and that the Balkan crisis has ended without a European war, but that is said to be due to his good luck and not to his capacity. In spite of these attacks and of his well-known indifference to office, I think his position—at least for the present—is secure. At his recent farewell audience of the Emperor, the latter said to the Russian Ambassador, Monsieur de Giers, that he—the Emperor—belonged to a generation of Monarchs who did not allow themselves to be controlled in their guidance of foreign affairs by newspaper articles and by so-called public talk, and that although he knew that Count Berchtold was attacked the latter had his complete support and approval for the policy he had pursued during the Balkan crisis. I also learn from a very confidential source that Monsieur de Bilinski, the Common Minister of Finance, who has been intriguing to upset Count Berchtold and to get his succession, had determined to seize the opportunity at a recent audience he had with the Emperor, to vigorously expose to His Majesty the current complaints against Count Berchtold, but when he entered the room the Emperor probably suspected what was in Monsieur de Bilinski's

mind and His Majesty at once began an eulogy of his Foreign Minister which prevented that Minister's opponent of getting in a word of disparagement against Count Berchtold.

Throughout the Balkan crisis endless little frictions have occurred between Vienna and Berlin, but none so serious as that which was caused by the German Emperor's telegram to the King of Roumania, congratulating him on the conclusion of the Bucharest peace.⁽¹⁾ Since that occurrence a real coolness has existed between the two Allies and when I enquired of Count Berchtold a few days ago whether there was any truth in the statement which had appeared in the German press that the Emperor William would pay a visit to the Emperor Francis Joseph at Schoenbrunn next month, he replied shortly that he had seen it so stated in the press but that he knew nothing whatever about it. The Emperor William is coming to Austria next month to shoot with the Archduke Francis Ferdinand and he seems to be very desirous of coming to Schoenbrunn to pay the Emperor a visit, but I learn from a private source that the latter is just now not at all desirous of discussing the political situation in the Near East with his Ally, for it seems that Germany has been recommending Austria-Hungary to cultivate good relations with Greece, Servia and Roumania and thereby to help draw these three countries into the orbit of the Triple Alliance. Here, on the contrary, there is a marked friendship for Bulgaria and it is also asserted that in formulating the foreign policy to be pursued by the Triple Alliance in the Near East, it is an understood thing that the wishes of Austria-Hungary shall prevail over those of Germany.

Yours truly
FAIRFAX CARTWRIGHT.

(4) [*v. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II), p. 979, No. 1229, *encl.* 2.]

No. 24.

Memorandum by Sir A. Nicolson.

F.O. 44558/30271/13/44.

Sir Edward Grey,

Foreign Office, September 27, 1913.

The Italian Chargé d'Affaires communicated to me today three telegrams.

1. As to meeting of Commission of Control M. di San Giuliano had tel[egraph]ed to the Italian Ambassador at Vienna to urge C[oun]t Berchtold to expedite meeting of Commission. I told P[rin]ce Borghese that at last an Austrian delegate had been appointed, and that our delegate was leaving London on the 30th instant for Vallona.

2. M. di San Giuliano suggested that the Powers should warn the Servian Gov[ernmen]t that their troops should not pass beyond the limits of those districts which had been allotted to them by the Powers. I told P[rin]ce Borghese that if all the Powers concurred in taking that step I presumed we should not stand aside. I pointed out that at present the Servians were engaged in endeavouring to regain possession of localities allotted to them by the Powers but which the Albanians had captured. Q[uer]y Tel[egraph] to Belgrade in sense desired—adding that no steps should be taken till all colleagues had been similarly instructed.⁽¹⁾

3. Italian Government had heard that an imposing demonstration of "many thousands" was being organized at Koritza to impress the Commission of delimitation with the popularity of Greek aspirations. M. di San Giuliano hoped representations would be made at Athens asking the Greek Government to discourage any such manifestations. I told him our Rep[resentati]ve would not hold himself aloof if all his colleagues were instructed—but that the representations would probably have little or no results and I sh[oul]d have thought the nerves of the Commission

(1) [*v. infra*, p. 21, No. 26.]

would not be affected by organized demonstrations. Q[uer]y telegraph as desired to Athens with usual reservation.⁽²⁾

A. N.
E. G.

MINUTES.

Sir E. Clowe.

In view of what we have heard to-day as to the attitude of the Greek and Servian Gov[ernmen]ts respectively⁽³⁾ on these two points, do you think these two telegrams are still necessary.

H. N.
Sept[ember] 29, 1913

Sir A. Nicolson thinks Yes.

E. A. C.
Sept[ember] 29.

⁽²⁾ [*v. infra*, p. 22, No. 27.]

⁽³⁾ [On September 29 two notes were communicated by the Servian Legation complaining of Albanian action beyond the frontier. (F.O. 44369/30271/13/44; 44372/30271/13/44.) The reference to the information as to the Greek attitude cannot be identified.]

No. 25.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.

Belgrade, September 28, 1913.

F.O. 44149/30271/13/44.

D. 12 Noon.

Tel. (No. 230.)

R. 6.30 P.M.

My Italian colleague has just seen Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs for the purpose of counselling prudence, under instructions from his Government.

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs gave him assurances that Servian action was purely defensive in its object and that Servia would act with great prudence, and that there was no intention of occupying Albanian territory or disregarding decision of Powers.

This remarkable change of tone may, in the opinion of my Italian colleague, be attributed to three causes: (1) To influence of Prime Minister, who has now been apprised fully of situation and who is expected back shortly; (2) financial pressure by French banks, who may have threatened refusal of payment of further instalments of loan (see my despatch No. 157)⁽¹⁾; and (3) to Bulgarian menace on frontier.

It remains to be seen whether Servian Government will be able to control military party and keep troops from following Albanian troops across frontier fixed at London.

⁽¹⁾ [Mr. Crackanthorpe's despatch (No. 157), D. September 9, R. September 13, 1913, stated that arrangements for a loan of £10,000,000 had been made between the Servian Government and a consortium of French Banks. £5,000,000 of this was "to be issued at the end of October, and the remainder at a suitable opportunity." A preliminary advance for the immediate use of the Servian Government was made on September 9, and a further advance was to be made on October 8. (F.O. 41988/41988/13/39.)]

No. 26.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Crackanthorpe.

F.O. 44558/30271/13/44.

Tel. (No. 129.)

Foreign Office, September 29, 1913, 7.15 P.M.

Italian Gov[ernmen]t suggest that all Powers should warn Servian Gov[ernmen]t that their troops should not pass beyond limits of districts allotted to Servia by Powers.

You may act accordingly if all your colleagues are similarly instructed.

No. 27.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Elliot.

F.O. 44558/30271/13/44.

Tel. (No. 131.)

Foreign Office, September 29, 1913, 7.15 P.M.

Italian Gov[ernmen]t learn that demonstration is being organized at Koritza to impress Commission of Delimitation with popularity of Greek aspirations, and suggest that all Powers should ask Greek Gov[ernmen]t to discourage such manifestations.⁽¹⁾

You may act accordingly if all your colleagues are similarly instructed.

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, pp 20-1, No. 24.]

No. 28.

*Sir F. Cartwright to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾**Vienna, September 30, 1913.*

F.O. 44606/30271/13/44.

Tel. (No. 147.)

D. 1.27 P.M.

R. 3.30 P.M.

I learn from a confidential source that pourparlers are going on between Vienna and Rome on the subject of Albanian invasion of Serbia and of its possible consequences.⁽²⁾ I am informed that the Austro-Hungarian Government desire that Austria and Italy should bring pressure to bear on Belgrade together, whereas for the present the Italian Government prefer that the step should be taken collectively by the Powers. I am informed that up to last night no agreement had been arrived at on this point. The Austro-Hungarian Government maintain that unless Austria and Italy show at Belgrade that they are united and determined not to allow any alteration of the north-eastern frontier of Albania representations will have no effect on the Servian Government.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Rome (as No. 290); to Paris (as No. 350); to Berlin (as No. 344); to St. Petersburg (as No. 677).]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. O.-U.A.*, VII, pp. 383-4, No. 8760; p. 390, No. 8768.]

No. 29.

Lord Granville to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 44824/33220/13/44.

(No. 353.) Confidential.

Berlin, D. September 30, 1913.

Sir,

R. October 2, 1913.

As I had the honour to report in my telegram No. 167 of yesterday,⁽²⁾ Herr von Jagow takes a very gloomy view of the situation in the Balkans. He thinks there is very little doubt that the Albanian movement against Serbia is being engineered and probably directed by Turkey, and he told me that Baron von Wangenheim had reported that the direction of affairs in Turkey seemed to be passing more and more from Constantinople to Adrianople, where, it must be noted, Izzet Pasha was an Albanian. I saw the Servian Chargé d'Affaires last night just after he had had an interview with Herr von Jagow and he told me that Herr von Jagow had made the same remark to him about Izzet Pasha. Herr von Jagow argues that the

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

⁽²⁾ [Lord Granville's telegram (No. 167) of September 29, 1913, D. 2.35 P.M., R. 4 P.M., is not reproduced as the contents are sufficiently indicated above. (F.O. 44435/33220/13/44).]

obvious object of the Turks in stirring up the Albanians against Servia is to keep the latter country fully occupied and to prevent her coming to the assistance of her ally if Turkey attacks Greece. This His Excellency thinks is almost certain: Turkey was so encouraged by her success in recovering Adrianople and a good slice of Thrace that she might well think herself capable of inflicting a severe defeat on Greece. If she succeeded in doing so, she would presumably take Cavalla at least, if not Salonica, insist on favourable terms on the Vakoufs and nationality questions and no doubt recover some of the Islands. Whether having captured Cavalla Turkey would hand it over to Bulgaria in exchange for Dedeagatch remained to be seen. Baron von Wangenheim had mentioned the Islands to the Grand Vizier, who had replied with protestations of his innocence of any idea of interfering with what lay in the hands of the Powers, but had added "sournoisement" that if the Powers gave all the Islands to Greece "c'est la guerre."

I have, &c.

GRANVILLE.

No. 30.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.

Belgrade, October 2, 1913.

F.O. 44950/30271/13/44.

D. 2.5 P.M.

Tel. (No. 238.)

R. 6.15 P.M.

Your telegram No. 118 of Aug[ust] 9.⁽¹⁾

My Austrian colleague made individual representations yesterday under instructions. My French and Russian colleagues are as yet without instructions to make joint representations. My Austrian colleague received assurances similar to those given to my Italian colleague (see my telegram No. 230 of Sept[ember] 28).⁽²⁾

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs explained to me at length this morning present attitude of Servian Government in regard to Albania. He affirmed Servian military action to be purely defensive and disclaimed any ulterior design of annexing any portion of Albania. With a view to final (group undecypherable) of Albanian revolt, Servian troops would probably be compelled to cross frontier fixed at London, and even perhaps occupy strategic positions to west of Black Drin, but he assured me occupation would be only provisional pending the establishment of order within Albania, and, above all, conclusion of peace between Greece and Turkey, which would set at rest Servian fears of Turkish propaganda in Albania.

His Excellency spoke of Turkish danger with considerable apprehension, and alluded with tears in his eyes to the injustice of request made by my Austrian colleague yesterday,⁽³⁾ with which he hoped Powers would not associate themselves, and which was tantamount to requiring Servian forces to keep a large amount of her army occupied in defending a weak and unprotected frontier at a moment when danger was threatening her from the east.

After reading me telegram from Servian Chargé d'Affaires in London stating attitude of His Majesty's Government was one of non-intervention, his Excellency urged strongly necessity of Powers exercising some form of restraining influence on Turkey. Would not England, France, Germany, and Russia combine for this purpose? Or, failing this, could not advice be given at Bucharest to intervene actively on behalf

⁽¹⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 118) of August 9, 1913, repeated a note from Count Mensdorff stating that Servian troops still occupied territory which would prevent Albanian tribes from reaching Djakova market. When his colleagues had been similarly instructed, Mr. Crackanthorpe was to request the Servian Government "to withdraw troops and to allow Albanians free and unconditional access to Djakova." (F.O. 35810/30271/13/44.)]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 21, No. 25.]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. O.-U.A.*, VII, pp. 388-90, No. 8766.]

of peace? He had telegraphed last night to Servian Minister at Bucharest asking him to press this.

It is evident that Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs is so preoccupied with Græco-Turkish relations that everything else is for the moment forgotten, and that Servian troops will receive orders to occupy as quickly as possible all strategical positions necessary for protection of frontier, ostensibly to free bulk of troops for possible operations elsewhere.

MINUTES.

Please see also 44951.(4)

The Russian Chargé d'Affaires told me yesterday that Russia had told Austria that she would not join in this step at Belgrade though she was willing to give friendly and moderating advice. The Powers were responsible for Albania and it was unreasonable to expect Serbia to abstain from measures of defence which Albanian action rendered necessary.

As M. Etter was going to see Sir E. Crowe I did not record what he said.

H. N.

Oct[ober] 3, 1913.

R. P. M.

Oct[ober] 3/13.

It is not clear what is the Austrian demand referred to. It might perhaps be well to find out. Qu[ery] telegraph.(5)

(En clair)

"Your tel[egram] No. 238.

"What exactly is Austrian request referred to in third paragraph?"(6)

E. A. C.

Oct[ober] 3

A. N.

(4) [Mr. Crackanthorpe's telegram (No. 239) of October 2, 1913, D. 6-30 P.M., R. 11 P.M., stated that Rumania had promised to exercise pressure at Sofia and Athens, but had also asked for an explanation of Servian intentions in Albania. (F.O. 44951/30271/13/44.)]

(5) [This telegram was sent to Belgrade (as No. 131) of October 3, 1913.]

(6) [Mr. Crackanthorpe's telegram (No. 244) of October 4, 1913, stated that "Austrian representations drew attention to serious consequences of a military action against Albania which might contravene decisions Conference London and place Serbia in contradiction therewith and which Servian Gov[ernment] might easily avoid by respecting rigorously those decisions." (F.O. 45261/30271/13/44.)]

No. 31.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir A. Nicolson.(1)

Private.(2)

Dear Sir Arthur,

St. Petersburg, October 2, 1913.

Thank you very much for your letter of the 22nd ultimo(3) and for your kind congratulations.

There has indeed been a change for the worse in the political weather since I wrote to you a fortnight ago.(4) You will have seen from my telegrams that in the Serbo-Albanian question Neratow has shown himself disposed to support Serbia rather far, at any rate in theory. He approves of the Servians penetrating into Albania in order to chastise the Albanians, and of their retaining strategical points after the military operations are concluded, as a precautionary measure. He also considers

(1) [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe; to Lord Morley. The endorsement is initialled by Sir Edward Grey.]

(2) [Carnock MSS., Vol. IX of 1913.]

(3) [Not reproduced. It congratulated Mr. O'Beirne on his recent promotion to the rank of Minister Plenipotentiary in the Diplomatic Service. Carnock MSS., Vol. VIII of 1913.]

(4) [Not reproduced. This letter, dated September 18, 1913, referred mainly to the Persian railway question, but also mentioned that "a flat calm prevails here in the sphere of foreign politics." Carnock MSS., Vol. IX of 1913.]

that the Servians are entitled to claim territorial compensation from Albania, and when I suggested that this would bring them into collision with the decisions of the London Conference he maintained that since the Powers were responsible for the existence of Albania as a neutral State under their guarantee they could not dispute the right of another State, which had been the object of unprovoked attack from Albania, to recover compensation for the losses thereby caused. Thus in theory he sides with the Servians and approves of their intentions, but how far he will support them in practice is of course a very different matter. All I would feel safe in saying is that Russia would be inclined to do more for Serbia than for any other of her former protégés in the Balkans. Neratow spoke of course on the assumption that the Servians would have no difficulty in dealing with the Albanian rising, which does not now seem to be altogether clear. I need hardly say that he is thoroughly suspicious of Austria's present policy. He thinks that her aim is to create embarrassments for Serbia and to use those embarrassments to bring pressure on Serbia in negotiating the various questions economic and other that remain open between them. . . .⁽⁵⁾

Yours very sincerely,
HUGH O'BEIRNE.

⁽⁵⁾ [The omitted paragraphs refer to the degree to which Greece could depend on the support of Russia, France, or Serbia, in the event of a conflict with Turkey, and to the question of Armenian reforms; but they add nothing of importance to information given elsewhere.]

No. 32.

Sir F. Cartwright to Sir Edward Grey.

Vienna, October 6, 1913.

F.O. 45559/30271/13/44.

D. 8.25 P.M.

Tel. (No. 151.)

R. 10.5 P.M.

I asked Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs to-day whether he could give me any information with regard to his recent interview with Servian Prime Minister.⁽¹⁾ He said it was satisfactory as far as it went, but he could not guarantee sincerity of Servian Prime Minister. Latter had assured him of desire of the Servian Government to live on a friendly footing with Austria, observing that now sanjak question was dead there was no cause for quarrel between the two countries. They had talked a good deal about commercial and railway questions in friendly but vague terms. I asked Minister for Foreign Affairs if Servian Prime Minister had given any assurances that Serbia would not invade Albania. Servian Prime Minister seems to have ridiculed the idea of invasion, but, I understand, gave no formal assurance on this point. He seems, however, to have hinted that Serbia desired rectification of Albanian frontier for strategical reasons.

Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs at once declared that he could admit of no alteration of the frontier established in London, and pointed out that frontier was a bad one, and that Djakova and other places ought strategically to belong to Albania. With regard to Albanian rebellion, Servian Prime Minister thought that it would soon be suppressed.

Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs told me confidentially that he was informed that Essad Pasha had declared that, should Serbia invade Albania, he would do his utmost to help Provisional Government in resisting such invasion.

⁽¹⁾ [M. Pašić had an interview with Count Berchtold in Vienna on October 3. *cp. infra*, pp. 28-9, No. 34. He returned to Belgrade on the 4th.]

No. 33.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 46578/30271/13/44.

(No. 176.)

Sir,

Belgrade, D. October 8, 1913.

R. October 13, 1913.

Since writing my despatch No. 168 Confidential of the 25th ultimo,⁽²⁾ developments have occurred which have tended to moderate, outwardly at least, the very uncompromising attitude previously taken at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in regard to the frontiers of Northern Albania and the withdrawal of the Servian troops from within those frontiers. The present tone towards Austria on this question is very different to that adopted only three weeks ago, and both in the reply given by the acting Minister for Foreign Affairs to the individual representations made in Belgrade by the Austrian Government requesting that the frontier fixed at London should be respected, and in the assurances given by Monsieur Pashitch in Vienna, there is ample evidence that the Servian Government feels it was getting out of its depth, and wishes, with much splash and display of innocent intention, to retreat into safer waters.

The causes of this change of attitude appear to me to be twofold. In the first place the Servian Government has been and still is suffering from a very bad attack of nerves over Greco-Turkish relations. As a proof of this two Divisions and the mountain artillery have been officially mobilized, while the Minister of War has received full latitude in regard to further mobilization of which he has already availed himself to the extent of calling out the 1st ban[d]s of the Danube and Schumadia Divisions. There are now approximately 123,000 Servian troops on a war-footing. Rightly or wrongly the Servian Government believes there is some sort of a secret understanding between Turkey and Bulgaria in regard to action against Greece; it is convinced that both Turkey and Bulgaria have connived in the Albanian uprising, and that Austria is secretly encouraging the whole band of conspirators. The fear has been lest Turkey should attack Greece before the Albanian revolt were quelled, and before the portion of the army engaged with Albania could be set free; lest Bulgaria should at the same time by threatening the Serbo-Bulgarian frontier line keep a further portion of the Servian Army occupied for purposes of defence; and lest the Greek Army, in which Serbia has no confidence, should in the absence of sufficient assistance from the allied force, suffer a serious and irredeemable reverse at the hands of the Turks.

Faced with this eventuality, Serbia has, as I had the honour to inform you by telegraph, made fervid appeals to Roumania to intervene both at Sofia and at Constantinople in the interests of peace. I understand that although the Roumanian Government does not apparently take so alarmist a view of the situation and does not believe in a secret Turco-Bulgarian understanding, yet it has consented to speak at Constantinople, to give warning at Sofia that the Treaty of Bucharest must not be upset, and to give friendly advice at Athens that the Greek Government should moderate its pretensions. The Servian Government, believing that Bulgaria may be inciting Turkey to action in the conviction that whatever the result of a Greco-Turkish war she would reap some territorial advantages either East or West, is now pressing the Roumanian Government to point out at Constantinople that owing to the attitude adopted by Roumania towards Bulgaria, the latter's hands are practically tied, and that Turkey would do well not to listen to the voice of the Siren. Finally, I am told at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs that Serbia has obtained from Roumania the positive assurance that in the event of Turco-Bulgarian attack on Greece and Serbia, Roumania would mobilize and throw in her lot with them. The Servian Government though greatly reassured by Roumania's attitude, does not consider that the danger point is yet passed, and has more than once expressed to the Representatives of the Triple Entente Powers in Belgrade its earnest wish for intervention at Constantinople.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 14-6, No. 20.]

In spite of the great anxiety evinced at the Servian Foreign Office in regard to the Turkish danger, I cannot help feeling that its continuance and especially the report of Turkish connivance in the Albanian uprising have been made the most of in Belgrade in order to cover and justify the extensive Military operations which have been undertaken against the Albanians. As reported in my telegram No. 238 of the 2nd instant,⁽³⁾ Monsieur Spalaikovitch, the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, alluded in the most pathetic language to what he termed the injustice of the representations made individually by the Austrian Chargé d'Affaires on the 1st instant,⁽⁴⁾ in which he trusted the other Powers would not associate themselves. These representations drew the attention of the Servian Government to the serious consequences of a military action against Albania which might contravene the decision of the Conference of London and place Serbia in contradiction therewith. These consequences Serbia might easily avoid by respecting rigorously those decisions. Monsieur Spalaikovitch told me he considered this request tantamount to requiring Serbia, at a moment when serious danger was threatening her from the East, to keep a large portion of her army engaged in defending a frontier which, it is claimed, is naturally weak and unprotected. It is evident that the more dangerous the Albanian uprising can be shown to be, the stronger from her point of view becomes Serbia's case for a rectification of her frontier.

Be that as it may, the Servian troops after driving back the Albanians, which they found no difficulty in doing, have been hurried back to the strategic positions within Albania some of which lie to the West of the Black Drin. What Serbia intends to do now it is difficult to say. For the moment at any rate she will probably lie as low as is compatible with the fact that her troops are again out of bounds, and I come here to the second cause of the more conciliatory tone recently adopted by the Servian Government towards Austria in the Albanian question. Various instalments of the loan recently contracted with the French Banks are due this month (see my despatch No. 157 of September 9⁽⁵⁾). £480,000 are due in fact today and approximately £4,100,000 at the end of this month. Some days ago Monsieur Patchu, the Minister of Finance, received an unpleasant morning call from the Director of the Credit Serbe who informed him that the fulfilment of the loan contract would have to depend on Serbia's good behaviour in Albania, and that if she meant to go to war with Albania supplies would be stopped. It thus became a material necessity to make every protestation of good intentions, and of the desire to conform to the decisions of the Powers. Whether these protestations are genuine remains to be seen.

Reviewing generally the situation, there appears on the one hand to be no doubt that Austria and Serbia sincerely wish not to have a quarrel, yet awhile at any rate, over Albania. In Austria a large and influential section of the commercial community desires good economic relations with Serbia, and a truce to the hostile policy which has deprived Austria of her best and nearest customer. To this community it would doubtless appear positively unnatural that Austria should get mixed up in a quarrel with Serbia over Albania. Then again Austria must recognize that to execute her wishes in Albania by force of arms would involve mobilization and a great expense which she is at present little able to defray. Serbia on her side has, as I have indicated in previous despatches, a sincere desire for peace and for better relations with Austria. She considers this to be essential to the success of her task of internal consolidation.

As against this must be set the fact that Serbia is at present bent on obtaining a better strategic frontier in Albania by every means at her disposal. She claims that the only natural frontier, on both strategic and economic grounds, is the watershed between the Black Drin and the Adriatic; on strategic grounds, because without this frontier she will be exposed to constant and renewed attacks; on economic grounds, because the trend of trade lies East and West of the Watershed, and because by cutting off large districts of Albania from the market towns by means of an artificial frontier

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 23-4, No. 30, and *min.*, and *notes* ⁽³⁾ and ⁽⁵⁾]

⁽⁴⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 24, No. 30, *note* ⁽⁶⁾.]

⁽⁵⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 21, No. 25, *note* ⁽¹⁾.]

like that fixed in London, a perennial source of disturbance and discontent is created. Unfortunately I have not found Servians amenable to the obvious reply that Djakova, Prizrend and Dibra might upon this score and with equal fairness have been given to Albania.

A short time since there was much talk of Serbia's claiming compensation from Albania for the attack made upon her, and this claim would it was said take a territorial form. For the moment this matter of compensation has been allowed to drop in conformity with the desire to pour as much oil as possible on the troubled waters, and the Servian Government has been approaching the Austrian Government with an offer of economic concessions in return for a rectification of the frontier. With this subject I am dealing in a separate despatch.⁽⁶⁾

Finally I should say that Serbia is still waiting for Austria to show definitely her hand over the question of the Albanian frontier. This she will presumably do when the Powers are placed in presence of the fait accompli of the occupation by Servian troops of certain strategic positions within Albania. Judging from past experience, Serbia would be surprised at nothing and though she would welcome a conciliatory disposition on the part of Austria, she hardly dares as yet to expect it. Behind everything looms the nebulous form of Russian Pan Slavism and the danger is always present of unofficial influences being brought to bear from that quarter to stiffen Serbia's back against Austria, with a special view to nip in the bud any chance of a real Austro-Servian rapprochement.

I have, &c.

DAYRELL CRACKANTHORPE.

Copy sent to Vienna.

⁽⁶⁾ [v. immediately succeeding document.]

No. 34.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 46574/45426/18/39.

(No. 177.) Confidential.

Sir,

Belgrade, D. October 8, 1913.

R. October 13, 1913.

I have received private, and, I have reason to believe, reliable information to the effect that during Monsieur Pashitch's recent visit to Vienna⁽¹⁾ the following proposals were made on the Austrian and the Servian sides respectively with a view to arriving at a general basis of understanding preliminary to the revision of the Austro-Servian Treaty of Commerce.

The following were I hear the Austrian proposals :

1. That Serbia should complete the railway lines connecting with the Bosnian frontier at three points, viz :

(a.) MITROVITZA—UVAC. It is proposed as I understand that this line should make a detour via Rashka to Slavlya, so as to avoid the difficult country between the latter place and Mitrovitza.

(b.) UZITCHÉ—VISHEGRAD.

(c.) VALYEVO—LOZNITZA.

Of these three proposed connections, the first two are, in Austrian estimation, the most important. I understand Monsieur Pashitch to have intimated that the Servian Government would be glad to meet the Austrian Government in this respect.

(2) That a reservation should be made in favour of Austria of a considerable proportion of the tobacco produced in the new Servian territories, in view of the advantages enjoyed by Austria in this respect under the Turkish régime. To this Monsieur Pashitch is said to have made no objection.

⁽¹⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 25, No. 32, note (1).]

(3) The abolition of the restrictions imposed at the commencement of the Balkan war under which Austrian industrial products were placed at a disadvantage in the matter of tenders for Government contracts and deprived of free competition with the products of other countries.

(4) Most-favoured nation treatment on a basis of reciprocity.

I am informed that, on his side, Monsieur Pashitch made the following proposals :

(1) Rectification of the Bosnian-Servian frontier along the river Drina which appears to have recently altered its course.

(2) Rectification of the Albanian frontier from a strategic point of view. I am told that Count Berchtold did not show any willingness to discuss this point, but stated that the Austrian Delegate on the Commission of Delimitation would be instructed to ascertain in conjunction with his colleagues, the feeling of the local tribes, and that should such feeling be favourable, the matter would be considered. This would appear to be practically equivalent to a polite refusal to consider the Servian request.

(3) The purchase by Servia of the Orient Railway lines traversing Servian territory. This was, I believe, merely discussed in principle.

(4) The abolition of the prohibition to transport Servian live stock to Italy and elsewhere through Austria-Hungary. Monsieur Pashitch did not, as I understand, ask for any increase in the limit of live stock importable into Austria-Hungary under the existing Treaty, and I gather that Count Berchtold was inclined to view favourably the demand for facilities in the matter of transit.

I conclude that no definite decisions were come to as a result of the meeting, but that the ground has in some measure been prepared for the Austrian and Servian Delegates who are, I hear, to meet in Vienna towards the end of the present month. At present it looks as if the question of the Albanian frontier will prove the chief obstacle to a satisfactory understanding.

I have, &c.

DAYRELL CRACKANTHORPE.

Copy sent to Vienna.

MINUTE.

The answer given by Berchtold to M. Pashitch respecting a possible rectification of the North Albanian frontier is in strange contradiction with the abrupt demand now made (see 47129⁽²⁾) for the definite withdrawal of the Servian troops from the strategical points now in their occupation inside the Albanian frontier.

E. A. C.

Oct[ober] 17.

E. G.

(²) [*v. infra*, pp. 32-3, No. 38.]

[*ED. NOTE.*—On October 11, 1913, Sir Eyre Crowe reported a conversation which he had held on that date with Count Mensdorff. The latter had described the anxiety of the Austro-Hungarian Government "to put an end to the friction which had arisen at Scutari. . . . Count Berchtold's proposal," he said, "is that with the assembly of the Committee of Control at Vallona on the 15th, the Commission of Admirals should be held automatically to expire, and that the administration of Scutari should continue in the hands of the several smaller bodies referred to, under the supreme authority of the Committee of Control. This would be a strictly temporary and transitory arrangement, and be without prejudice to any recommendation which the Committee of Control might eventually make as to the superior authority to be charged definitely with the administration of the town as a whole."

Sir Eyre Crowe told Count Mensdorff that he "would at once report this to Sir E. Grey," but that the proposal did not, as entirely as Count Mensdorff thought, meet "the views of H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] as to not leaving the administration in suspense pending the report of the Committee of Control." Finally, "Count Mensdorff, before leaving, once more accentuated the importance of accepting the most friendly compromise thus suggested by his government, and said its rejection would have a most deplorable effect." (F.O. 46795/26171/13/44.) *cp. infra*, pp. 33-4, No. 38, *min.*]

Mr. Dering to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 47817/26171/13/44.

(No. 283.)

Sir,

Rome, D. October 14, 1913.

R. October 18, 1913.

As I had the honour to telegraph to you to-day,⁽¹⁾ I saw the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs this morning in order to communicate to him the substance of your telegram to Paris No. 365,⁽²⁾ in regard to the proposal of the Austro-Hungarian Government that the Commission of Admirals at Scutari should be dissolved as soon as the International Commission of Control should have assembled at Vallona.

Marquis Di San Giuliano said that he would of course be obliged to consult the Austro-Hungarian Government, which he would do at once by telegraph. Meanwhile he would state his personal opinion that, as regards the officer to command the international military contingents, it would be far preferable that he should be of British nationality and added that he was ready to recommend this at Vienna, feeling that the British character was the most suitable for such an appointment, which required an officer with calm and unprejudiced judgment, a quality which was essentially possessed by the British race. He did not know, however, whether the Austro-Hungarian Government could be induced to consent. He must nevertheless make the necessary stipulation that the officer selected should have the necessary military seniority, which, he understood, the officer at present commanding the British contingent did not possess. I remarked that I supposed that he could be given the requisite rank, if necessary, to which he replied that he would in that case have to be raised two grades at once, in order to be qualified.

Referring to your condition that a civilian Governor or some chief authority should be appointed immediately by the Commission of Control, or in consultation with them, His Excellency observed that the Commission is due to meet to-morrow, and that it would be hard, and in fact next to impossible to find a civilian Governor at a moment's notice. I asked him whether he considered it of moment whether the Governor or other such functionary were an Albanian or a national of other European countries. Marquis Di San Giuliano replied that in his opinion either one or the other would do. . . .⁽³⁾ The chief thing was to find a solution for to-morrow which would prevent Austria from committing some "coup de tête," as he feared she might do, if some solution were not found. I asked what it was that he apprehended, and he answered that he would deplore Austria's withdrawal of her Admiral and military contingent, which would inevitably be accompanied by the withdrawal of the German Naval Captain and military force. This eventuality ought to be avoided at any cost, as it would have a lamentable effect in the Balkans and in Europe generally.

He agreed when I took this opportunity of observing that it appeared to me a highly regrettable principle to adopt that an International Commission could be broken up by any one Power represented on it by the method of arbitrarily withdrawing its representative from the deliberations of the Commission solely because there was a difference of opinion between the delegates upon any one point, but His Excellency added that Austria appeared to be growing rather less intractable, and had already given way upon several points, upon which she had insisted formerly, such as the Drin River Bridge question. He hoped therefore that she would be induced to abandon

(1) [Mr. Dering's telegram (No. 176) of October 14, 1913, D. 4 P.M., R. 9 P.M., is not reproduced as the contents are sufficiently indicated above. (F.O. 46828/26175/13/44.)]

(2) [Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 365) to Sir F. Bertie of October 13, 1913, D. 3-30 P.M., stated that he was prepared to agree to the proposal of the Austro-Hungarian Government, on condition that a civil Governor should be appointed to be in authority at Scutari. (F.O. 46365/26171/13/44.) The telegram was repeated to Rome (No. 308); to Berlin (No. 359); to St. Petersburg (No. 696); to Vienna (No. 292). A copy was sent to the Admiralty for transmission to the Admiral at Scutari. *cp. supra*, pp. 17-8, *Ed. note.*]

(3) [Two lines of personal comment are omitted here.]

her intransigent attitude, but thought it advisable that she should not be pressed too far, for fear of what he had already stated. It was important that a *modus vivendi* should be speedily arrived at. I said that this was of course equally the desire of His Majesty's Government. Incidentally he informed me that the Austro-Hungarian delegate on the Commission of Control was due to leave Brindisi for Vallona to-day.

In the course of conversation, Marquis Di San Giuliano referred to his memorandum on the subject of the work of the Admirals' Commission, copy of which I had the honour to forward to you yesterday in my despatch No. 282,⁽¹⁾ and said that it was quite unreasonable, under the circumstances, to maintain that a unanimous vote was necessary for any decision of the Commission to have effect, and that he had strongly argued the matter at Vienna. All immediate precedents were against the Austro-Hungarian contention.

I have, &c.

HERBERT G. DERING.

⁽¹⁾ [Mr. Dering's despatch (No. 282), D. October 13, R. October 16, 1913, is not reproduced as its contents are sufficiently indicated above. (F.O. 46988/26171/13/44.) *cp. supra*, pp. 17-8, *Ed. note*]

No. 36.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Crackanthorpe.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 46871/30271/13/44.

(No. 63.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 15, 1913.

The Italian Chargé d'Affaires informed Sir E. Crowe on the 10th instant that the Italian Representative at Belgrade had been instructed to make in the most friendly manner a communication to the Servian Government begging them to make a declaration to the effect that if, in the course of the present frontier troubles, the Servian Government had to occupy portions of Albanian territory, they did so only provisionally, and for strategical reasons.

Don Livio Borghese added that the Italian Government hoped that you might be similarly instructed.

You are authorised to make the proposed communication if all your colleagues receive similar instructions.

I am, &c.

[E. GREY.]

⁽¹⁾ [The draft was signed by Sir Eyre Crowe for Sir Edward Grey. A minute initialled by Sir Edward Grey authorized its despatch. A note was sent to Prince Borghese to inform him of the above instruction.]

No. 37.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 47028/26171/13/44.

Belgrade, D. October 15, 1913, 10 P.M.

Tel. (No. 255.)

R. October 16, 1913, 8 A.M.

Albania.

Austrian Chargé d'Affaires tells me that he is now convinced that Servian Government intends by every means in its power to make occupation of strategical positions permanent. He apprehends that a situation very dangerous to future Austro-Servian relations will shortly arise and believes outside influences are supporting Servian Government in its pretensions.

Government organ publishes to-night a communiqué to the effect that Servian troops have received orders to advance no further in Albania but that they will continue to occupy strategic positions until security of frontier is guaranteed and question of delimitation is finally decided, and thinks, in the event of any further attacks on part of Albanians, the Servian troops received orders to act only on the defensive.

(Last paragraph repeated to Admiral at Scutari.⁽¹⁾)

MINUTES.

The outside influences referred to are presumably Russian

H. N.
Oct[ober] 16, 1913
R. P. M.
Oct[ober] 16/13.

I fancy the Austrian Chargé d'Affaires at Belgrade is by force of tradition and circumstances always seeing evil designs.

E. A. C.
Oct[ober] 16
A. N.

We cannot countenance any designs contrary to decisions at Ambassadors' Conference in London

E. G.

(¹) [*cp. supra*, pp. 17-8, *Ed. note.*]

No. 38.

Sir E. Goschen to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Berlin, October 16, 1913.

F.O. 47129/30271/13/44.

D. 3.40 P.M.

Tel. (No. 180.)

R. 4.45 P.M.

Servia and Albania.

Acting Secretary of State has just read me a telegram which he has received from Vienna containing a message from Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs to the following effect: Austro-Hungarian Government had sent a strongly worded representation to the Servian Government pointing out that the decisions of the London Conference with regard to Albanian frontier must be respected and that Servian troops should be retired to beyond that frontier. Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs' message added that unless he received a speedy and satisfactory answer from the Servian Government he intended to follow up his representations by fixing a time for the retirement. He trusted that in this procedure he would receive support of German Government. He hoped that moral support would be all that would be required, but Austro-Hungarian Government was in this matter quite determined not to give way. This resolution on the part of Austro-Hungarian Government had the full approval of the Emperor of Austria.⁽²⁾

Acting Secretary of State was much perturbed, and said that everything must be done to prevent Austria-Hungary, who, he feared, was only too anxious to settle scores with Servia, from taking separate action. If she did, Bulgaria would almost certainly attack Servia in the rear, and no one could foresee where matters would stop.

He had at once telegraphed to Belgrade advising retirement of troops.

He hoped that you would recognise the gravity of the situation, giving similar advice, and, moreover, do what you could to persuade others to do so.

(¹) [This telegram was sent to Paris (as No. 370); to Rome (as No. 312); to Vienna (as No. 295); to St. Petersburg (as No. 705); to Belgrade (as No. 133). A conversation between M. de Fleuriau and Sir Eyre Crowe on this subject is recorded in *D.D.F.*, 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VIII, pp. 436-8, No. 347.]

(²) [*cp. G.P.*, XXXVI (I), pp. 384-6.]

He gave me to understand that he was also addressing the French and Russian Governments on the subject, but that he should not use quite such plain language as he had used to me.

He is also sending you a message through the German Chargé d'Affaires.⁽³⁾

MINUTES.

Sir E. Grey.

This only reaches me as your pouch is leaving.

It seems to me quite wrong that Austria should address an ultimatum to Serbia, without consulting or at least informing us, in order to enforce a decision arrived at by the Ambassadors' conference. This is tantamount to breaking up the concert without any warning.

There is a good deal of force in the Servian contention that so long as the border tribes are restless, not to say on the actual war-path, and there is no Albanian authority to keep order among them or prevent them from raiding Servian territory, Serbia cannot equitably be asked to withdraw her military posts from those strategical points which dominate the frontier.

But whether this view be accepted or not, Austria does wrong to precipitate a conflict without even telling the other Powers. This is not straight-dealing.

E. A. C.

Oct[ober] 16.

Herr von Kühlmann called to-day to speak in the sense foreshadowed in this telegram. He laid stress principally on Herr von Jagow's earnest desire to prevent the Austro-Servian relations reaching a crisis. He had therefore instructed the German Representative at Belgrade to urge upon the Servian government the necessity of meeting the Austrian demand by giving binding assurances that Serbia, even if she could not withdraw her forces at once from the strategical position occupied in Albanian territory, definitely recognized the boundaries fixed by the Ambassadors' Conference, and that her troops would be withdrawn behind that frontier as soon as this was possible. Herr von Kühlmann thought it ought not to be difficult by united pressure at Belgrade to obtain satisfactory assurances to this effect.

I asked whether he was quite sure that this was what Herr von Jagow had in mind. Because, I told him, the telegraphic report we had received from Sir E. Goschen described the step taken by Herr von Jagow as an instruction to the German legation at Belgrade "advising retirement of troops." I had read this to mean that the Servians were to be requested to withdraw their troops from the strategical points referred to at once, and there seemed to me some force in the contention of the Servian gov[ernment] that, so long as there was no authority in Albania able to enforce peace and order on the border tribes and prevent such incursions into Servian territory as had been witnessed recently, it was not equitable to demand that Serbia should abstain from keeping order herself by the only means in her power.

Herr von Kühlmann was positive that Herr von Jagow's instructions did not imply the immediate withdrawal of the Servian forces, but some really definite arrangement ensuring its ultimate withdrawal. I said this would in my opinion materially facilitate the position, and would probably enable Sir E. Grey to use his influence in the desired direction. For it was entirely conformable to our view that the boundaries as laid down by the Ambassadors' Conference should be integrally respected.

Herr von Kühlmann hoped Sir E. Grey would telegraph to Belgrade soon, as this would offer the only means of avoiding the presentation of an Austrian ultimatum with a time limit.

I have drafted a telegram to Mr. Crackanthorpe, which I submit herewith.⁽⁴⁾

Soon after Herr von Kühlmann had left me, Count Mensdorff called, merely, he said, to thank me for having clearly explained to Sir E. Grey his important communication made last Saturday (Oct[ober] 11) respecting the Admirals' imbroglio at Scutari.⁽⁵⁾ He said he had no important news. I asked him what were his reports from Servia, and mentioned to him that the Servian Chargé d'Affaires had told me with great satisfaction yesterday morning of the excellent result which Monsieur Pashitch's conversations with Count Berchtold had had at Vienna. According to the Servian Chargé d'Affaires there had been a most welcome détente.

Count Mensdorff replied that unfortunately the good impression made at Vienna by M. Pashitch's utterances there, had been a good deal counteracted by the foolish language he had since used in talking to the Austro-Hungarian Chargé d'Affaires at Belgrade. He now talked of the right of Servia, as of every State, to take advantage of favourable political opportunities to enlarge the national boundaries, and clearly intimated an intention to insist on a rectification of the Northern Albanian boundary.

I asked Count Mensdorff whether this was not natural in view of what Count Berchtold had said to Mons[ieur] Pashitch in regard to the possibility of considering the question of a rectification of the frontier, should the feeling of the local tribes be favourable. I read out

⁽³⁾ [*cp. G.P., XXXVI (I), p. 389, p. 391, p. 394*]

⁽⁴⁾ [*cp. infra, pp. 36-7, No. 43, and min., and note (1).*]

⁽⁵⁾ [*cp. supra, p. 29, Ed. note.*]

the passage in Mr. Crackanthorpe's despatch No. 177 (46574) dealing with this point (the second of the proposals made by M. Pashitch).⁽⁶⁾

Count Mensdorff doubted whether Count Berchtold really intended to give any opening for a reconsideration of the frontier question, although he was apt to express himself so politely that perhaps M. Pashitch misunderstood him.

I suggested that it might be worth while to dissipate any possible misunderstanding by a more precise statement of the Austrian position.

Count Mensdorff then said that he had really no instructions to discuss this matter at all, and all that he had said must be regarded as quite private and confidential. He might possibly receive instructions to speak to Sir Edward Grey on the subject in a few days time.

In these circumstances I thought it better not to mention the fact that we had heard from Berlin of the Austrian representations at Belgrade and the threatened ultimatum.

E. A. C.

Oct[ober] 17.

I am telegraphing about this (?)

E. G.

18.10 13

⁽⁶⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 28-9, No. 34.]

⁽⁷⁾ [v. *infra*, pp. 36-7, No. 43.]

No. 39.

Consul-General Lamb to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Valona, October 16, 1913.

F.O. 47130/14809/13/44.

D. 7 P.M.

Tel. (No. 6.)

R. 10 P.M.

COMMISSION at its preliminary meeting to-day⁽²⁾ discussed question of delegate of Albania, and decided to submit to their respective Governments following alternatives, viz.: either to invite existing local authorities at Vallona and Durazzo and Scutari to submit names of two competent persons, between whom it should draw lots, or simply leave nomination of Albanian delegate to Provisional Government here.

The latter, which is Austrian proposal, would in my opinion damn the Commission in the eyes of two-thirds of Albania. I am strongly of opinion that we ought to have appearance of consulting the whole country.

Please let me know your views.⁽³⁾

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Paris (as No. 375); to St. Petersburg (as No. 710); to Berlin (as No. 370); to Vienna (as No. 301); to Rome (as No. 318); with the addition in a subsequent telegram that His Majesty's Government preferred the first alternative for the reason given by Mr. Lamb.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 1, *Ed. note.*]

⁽³⁾ [Mr. Lamb's despatch (No. 2), D. October 16, R. October 22, 1913, gives further details, but is not reproduced for reason of space. (F.O. 48019/14809/13.)]

No. 40.

Communication from M. Gruic.

Déclaration du Gouvernement Serbe.

Légation Royale de Serbie, Londres,

le 16 octobre 1913.

F.O. 47119/30271/13/44.

L'armée serbe—ayant chassé les bandes albanaises du territoire serbe et ayant occupé les positions stratégiques indispensables pour la défense du territoire du Royaume contre de nouvelles incursions—a reçu l'ordre de s'arrêter, et de ne plus pénétrer dans le territoire albanais. Elle y restera, provisoirement, en attendant l'établissement des conditions garantissant la paix sur la frontière, et la démarcation définitive de la frontière serbo-albanaise.⁽¹⁾

⁽¹⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 31-2, No. 37, and *infra*, immediately succeeding document.]

Comme l'Albanie est toujours encore en proie à l'anarchie, et qu'il n'y a pas de pouvoir assez fort et respecté pour imposer la paix, laquelle pourrait facilement être troublée par de nouvelles agressions,—l'armée serbe a reçu l'ordre de se borner à refouler l'ennemi, le cas échéant.

No. 41.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.

Belgrade, October 17, 1913.

F.O. 47278/30271/13/44.

D. 5 P.M.

Tel. (No. 256.) Confidential.

R. 7.30 P.M.

Albania.

On 15th October Austrian Chargé d'Affaires made, under instructions, strong representations to Servian Government requesting Servian troops to be outside frontier fixed at London within a brief delay, failing which Austro-Hungarians would be compelled to take such measures as may appear appropriate.⁽¹⁾ German Minister has now received instructions to support these representations.⁽²⁾

Austrian Chargé d'Affaires, though showing diffidence in pronouncing on Servian reply, gave me to understand that he considered it unsatisfactory and evasive.⁽³⁾

He tells me that Servian outposts are now at Oroshi, while troops have advanced into Albania in three columns, one being now consolidated in neighbourhood of Oroshi, another some 30 kilom. north of Elbassan, and third approximately same distance east of latter town on Skumbi.

He tells me that orders to cease advance (see my immediately preceding telegram of Oct[ober] 15⁽⁴⁾) were issued in presence of fact that Servian troops were advancing on ? Elbassan.

He believes that, failing unanimous pressure from Powers, which he fears may be difficult to obtain owing to attitude of Russian Minister, Servia will only withdraw troops when confronted with Austrian mobilisation on Bosnian frontier, the desire being to make compliance with Austrian wishes as expensive as possible to monarchy (I gathered that he has telegraphed this to his Government).⁽⁵⁾ But he tells me that if Austria had to mobilise again it would not be for nothing.

⁽¹⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp. 32-3, No. 38.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. G.P.*, XXXVI (I), p. 388.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. immediately preceding document.*]

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 31-2, No. 37.]

⁽⁵⁾ [*cp. O.-U.A.*, VII, pp. 435-6. No. 8828; pp. 442-5, Nos. 8834-6.]

No. 42.

Sir E. Goschen to Sir A. Nicolson.⁽¹⁾

Private.⁽²⁾

My dear Nicolson,

Berlin, October 17, 1913.

Thank you very much for your letter just received.⁽³⁾

You take a brighter view of the situation than I do—but then when you wrote you had not got my telegram of yesterday.⁽⁴⁾ A great deal depends now on the attitude of Russia—and Hartwig. For according to the telegram read to me yesterday by

⁽¹⁾ [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Prime Minister. The endorsement is initialled by Sir Edward Grey.]

⁽²⁾ [Carnock MSS., Vol. IX of 1913.]

⁽³⁾ The reference is to Sir A. Nicolson's letter of October 14. It is not reproduced as it does not give any information on political questions other than that obtained elsewhere. Carnock MSS., Vol. IX of 1913.]

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 32-3, No. 38, and *note* (2).]

Zimmermann the Austrians appear not only to be very excited but to mean business. Zimmermann read the telegram to me in German very fast—and with so much gesticulation that it was not possible to hear it all. But what I did hear made an unpleasant impression on me particularly the words “In diesem Fall werden wir nicht nachgeben” and also those to the effect that unless they received a speedy and satisfactory answer they would fix a “Frist” which in plain language means send an ultimatum. It struck me as rather emphatic that Berchtold should go out of his way to say that the procedure which he had indicated had the full approval of the Emperor Francis Joseph.

Zimmermann was so excited that in reading the telegram to me, he forgot to omit a sentence in the telegram which said that “the Servians instigated probably by Russia and France had advanced into Albania.” He half stopped but had gone too far—so he finished the sentence and said “This is between ourselves.”

He urged the necessity of all the Powers acting together and doing all they could to persuade Servia to withdraw her troops. “After all,” he said, “the Powers fixed the frontier and it is all their business to see that their decisions are respected—so there should be no difficulty in their acting together in an endeavour to prevent the situation arriving at a point at which Austria might feel herself justified in interfering.” He added that unless we all put our shoulders to the wheel in a determined effort to persuade Servia to withdraw her troops—we should be very much as we were before the Conference of Ambassadors in London.

I don’t feel that the danger of Bulgaria falling, in case of trouble, on Servia’s rear, is so great as Zimmermann appears to think. Other people seem to think that it will be some years before Bulgaria can make any great military effort and that above all the Bulgarian peasants are sick and tired of fighting.

The Servian question is serious but I can’t help thinking that, unless she is encouraged from any quarter, it will not be so very difficult to induce her to retire from her advanced positions. . . .⁽⁵⁾

Yours very sincerely.

W. E. GOSCHEN.

⁽⁵⁾ [The omitted paragraphs refer to the Greco-Turkish negotiations, the Ægean Islands and other matters not relevant to the present chapter. They add nothing of importance to information given elsewhere.]

No. 43.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 47129/30271/13/44.

Tel. (No. 367.)

Foreign Office, October 18, 1913, 2.10 P.M.

Your tel[egram] No. 180 of Oct[ober] 16.⁽²⁾

Separate action by Austria before even consulting other Powers makes things very difficult.⁽³⁾ The usual course would be not to take separate action till after some

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated as follows in accordance with Sir Edward Grey’s instructions:—“Repeat to Paris (No. 371) and to St Petersburg (No. 706)—saying ‘In reply to a communication from German Gov[ernmen]t, which has I understand been addressed to French and Russian Gov[ernmen]ts I am replying in the terms of my tel[egram] No. 367 to Berlin which I am repeating to you. You should inform

French
Russian

 M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] and ask his views.’”

Repeat to Vienna (No. 296) ‘for information only.’

Repeat to Belgrade (No. 134), adding ‘You should advise Servian Gov[ernmen]t accordingly.’” The instructions to inform Ministers for Foreign Affairs in the various capitals were sent in separate telegrams, normally numbered in sequence. In the case of Belgrade the instructions were in telegram (No. 136).]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 32–3, No. 38.]

⁽³⁾ [cp. *infra*, p. 38, *Ed. note*.]

attempt and failure to obtain co-operation of other Powers. For Austria to present an ultimatum to Serbia and then to demand the support of other Powers is in a sense to confront the Powers with an ultimatum.

Apart from this I think Serbia has some ground of complaint owing to delay of the Powers in establishing any settled Gov[ernmen]t in Albania.

I am however prepared to support at Belgrade the decisions of the Ambassadors' Conference in London respecting frontier between Albania and Serbia, and to advise Servian Gov[ernmen]t to give an assurance that Serbia will respect that frontier and that her troops have only crossed it as an emergency measure and will be withdrawn at the earliest practicable moment.

MINUTE

I have drafted this to save time in case of need.⁽⁴⁾ But should there come further information or any new development that makes it desirable to reconsider this to-morrow Sir A. Nicolson or Sir E. Crowe can suspend action or modify or adapt my drafts in acting upon them.

E. G.
17.10.13.

(⁴) [*cp. supra*, p. 33, No. 38, *min.*]

No. 44.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.

Belgrade, October 18, 1913.

F.O. 47498/30271/13/44.

Tel. (No. 258.)

D. 3.30 P.M.

R. 6.15 P.M.

Albanian frontier.

Your despatch No. 63 of Oct[ober] 15.⁽¹⁾

I asked Russian Minister this morning whether he had received similar instructions. He said he had not, and seemed to think these representations unnecessary, since he considers reply to Austrian representations made on 15th October, emphasising the fact that military action was now purely defensive, and that occupation was provisional pending final settlement of frontier, as being entirely satisfactory, and disposing of any suspicion that Serbia wished to make occupation permanent. He read me a telegram he was sending to his Government in this sense. To my remark that Austrian Government did not apparently view Servian reply with equal satisfaction, and was apparently unwilling to cede an inch of territory in Northern Albania, he replied that he believed that Austria was in reality ready to strike a bargain and to squeeze economic concessions out of Serbia in return for rectification of frontier. He said, moreover, that some latitude must necessarily be given to frontier commissioners, who would be in position to judge on the spot adequacy of paper frontier drawn up in London.

He assured me earnestly that Servian Government strongly desired peace, and was not out on an adventure. I believe these assurances of Russian Minister to be a genuine expression of his opinion so far as Servian Government is concerned; but military party must be reckoned with, and danger lest Servian Government may be unable, in the face of public opinion and recent Albanian uprising, to withdraw troops from Albania until such indefinite time as internal order is established, and lest Austria may, in the meantime, lose patience.

(¹) [*v. supra*, p. 31, No. 36.]

MINUTE.

Of course M. Hartwig w[oul]d be without instructions and w[oul]d think them unnecessary. But the matter has moved beyond this now, and more is required of the Servian Gov[ernmen]t than the rather anodyne Italian formula.

R. G. V.
Oct[ober] 20.
R. P. M.
Oct[ober] 20/13.
E. A. C.
Oct[ober] 20.

[*ED. NOTE.*—On October 18, during Count Mensdorff's temporary absence through illness, a communication was handed to Sir Eyre Crowe by Baron Gautsch. It was a copy of a very long telegram from Count Berchtold to Count Mensdorff, sent also to the other Embassies in Europe. The text is given in *O.-U.A.*, VII, pp. 455-7, No. 8854. The communication included the text of the Austro-Hungarian ultimatum to Servia, which was communicated at Belgrade at noon on the 18th. *cp. infra*, p. 39, No. 45; pp. 41-3, No. 49; pp. 43-4, No. 50; *cp. also G.P.*, XXXVI (1), pp. 397-8.

The following minute records Sir Eyre Crowe's conversation with Baron Gautsch (F.O. 47474/30271/13/44):—

MINUTE.

This paper was handed to me by Baron Gautsch, who said Count Mensdorff was laid up with a chill, but hoped to see Sir E. Grey at this office as early as convenient on Monday to discuss the grave situation disclosed in the present communication. I said I would at once submit it to Sir E. Grey. I asked whether Baron Gautsch could give me any further information to explain this sudden threat of war on Austria's part. It seemed at first sight difficult to understand what were the particular circumstances that were considered to justify this breaking loose from the Concert of the Powers in order to seek a solution singlehanded of a question hitherto treated as concerning all the Powers. I also asked on what date the ultimatum was presented. Failing this information it was impossible to say whether it was not proposed to go to war to-morrow, or whether it was intended to give the British time even merely to consider the situation thus created or not.

I further enquired whether the Austro-Hungarian government had considered the question what to do in case the Servian government after complying with the Austrian ultimatum found their territory invaded by Albanian bands. Did Austria contemplate giving Servia a guarantee that the Albanians on their part would keep the peace and remain within their borders? And if so what were the means at Austria's disposal to enforce such a guarantee?

To all these questions Baron Gautsch said, almost apologetically that neither he nor Count Mensdorff knew anything at all beyond what was in the telegram.

He asked me in turn whether I would express any views. I said no, I could only refer the communication to Sir E. Grey, adding that Baron Gautsch was unable to give any further information or explanations.

I asked him however to inform Count Mensdorff that as a result of his conversation with me yesterday, which I had reported to Sir E. Grey, Sir Edward has once more sent instructions to Mr. Crackanthorpe to give good advice to the Servian Government; and I told him the substance of those instructions⁽¹⁾ (not of the explanations to be given at Berlin).

E. A. C.
October 18

Sir Edward Grey added a note that he would see Count Mensdorff on the following Monday, *i.e.*, the 22nd. (*v. infra*, pp. 44-5, No. 51.)]

(¹) [*v. supra*, pp. 36-7, No. 43, note (¹)]

No. 45.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Belgrade, October 19, 1913.

F.O. 47493/30271/13/44.

D. 9 P.M.

Tel. (No. 260.)

R. 5.30 P.M.

Albania.

Your telegram No. 134 of October 18.⁽²⁾

I am to see Servian Prime Minister to-morrow, and meanwhile spoke to Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in the sense of your tel[egram] No. 136 of October 18.⁽²⁾

Under-Secretary of State repeated previous assurances that Servian Government would respect frontier when finally marked out, and said in this connection that instructions were being sent to Servian representatives to beg Powers to consider favourably slight rectification of frontier. Should this request, however, be refused, Servian Government would bow to wishes of Powers.

Under-Secretary of State then told me that note had been received yesterday afternoon from Austrian Legation demanding complete evacuation of Albania within eight days, failing which Austria would take necessary measures to enforce demand. In reply to my enquiry as to what answer would be given to this note, Under-Secretary of State informed me that a Council of Ministers was at present considering it, but that in his personal opinion Servian Government would be obliged to yield.

(1) [This telegram was sent to Paris (as No. 374); to Rome (as No. 316); to Berlin (as No. 369); to Vienna (as No. 300); to St. Petersburg (as No. 709); "for information."]

(2) [v. *supra*, p. 36, No. 43, note (1).]

No. 46.

Sir E. Goschen to Sir Edward Grey.

Berlin, October 19, 1913.

F.O. 47492/30271/13/44.

D. 4.36 P.M.

Tel. (No. 184.)

R. 5.30 P.M.

Austria and Servia.

I communicated to Acting Secretary of State substance of your telegram No. 367 of Oct[ober] 18.⁽¹⁾ He acknowledged that your point of view was quite correct. Austria had acted at Belgrade, both as regards her first representations⁽²⁾ and now the ultimatum,⁽³⁾ without even previous consultation with Germany. She had merely stated what she was going to do and had done it, but as the ultimatum had gone in it was now impossible for Germany to advise her to give way, both because advice would not be followed, and because it was not in Germany's own interest that her ally should send in an ultimatum and then retreat from it. He had been surprised that the Emperor of Austria had endorsed a policy which, under certain circumstances, might lead to serious consequences, but he had done so, and that made it clearer still that restraining advice at Vienna on the part of Germany was out of the question. I said that Austria seemed to have deliberately shut her eyes to the possible consequences of her precipitate and inconsiderate action. Acting Secretary of State replied that she was evidently gambling for her position as Great Power, and on the chance that Russia, where Pan-Slavist influence was on the wane, would discourage Servia from pitting herself against Austria.

(1) [v. *supra*, pp. 36-7, No. 43.]

(2) [v. *supra*, pp. 32-4, No. 38, and *min.*]

(3) [v. *supra*, p. 38, *Ed. note.*]

He considered advice you proposed giving at Belgrade was now too late. He disliked the idea of separate action on the part of Austria as much as anyone; only hope of avoiding it was the immediate withdrawal of the Servian troops, which he thought could be secured if the Powers responsible for the London decisions spoke strongly enough at Belgrade.⁽¹⁾

(⁴) [*v. supra*, pp 36-7, No. 43; *infra*, p. 41, No. 48.]

No. 47.

Sir F. Cartwright to Sir Edward Grey.

Vienna, October 20, 1913.

F.O. 47800/30271/13/44.

D. 8·5 P.M.

Tel. (No. 156.)

R. 10·15 P.M.

Count Berchtold told me to-day⁽¹⁾ that step he had taken at Belgrade was forced upon him by evasive attitude of Servian Government.⁽²⁾ He had given repeated warnings to Servian Government that they must not allow their army to cross frontier. They not only had done so, but were putting forward one reason after another in justification of their action. When Servian Prime Minister was recently in Vienna,⁽³⁾ Count Berchtold had impressed upon him that Austria-Hungary would stand no trifling in matter of Albanian frontier. He had then made what appeared to be a reassuring declaration, but as soon as he got back to Belgrade he took no heed of it. Austria-Hungary was country nearest Albania, and one most interested in her fate, and it was therefore incumbent on Austria-Hungary to see that decisions taken by European Powers in London were upheld. Austria-Hungary had yielded with regard to Djakova and other places in order to maintain European concert unbroken, but she could not tolerate that such territory as she had saved for new State of Albania should be encroached upon by Servia. Count Berchtold's action did not mean that he wished to break away from European concert, and he was merely trying by a categorical declaration to make the Servian Government understand that they must abide by decisions of London Conference. Count Berchtold told me that his action was supported at Belgrade by Italy and Germany, and he hoped it would be supported by other Powers.

I pointed out to Count Berchtold that, though almost all Powers sympathised with aim of Austrian action, manner in which it was done without consulting other Powers seemed to me, however, to be too precipitate. He replied that it was only by Austria clearly indicating that she would stand no more evasive replies from Servian Government that she could induce them to give way to the will of Europe.

Count Berchtold expressed himself to me as fairly confident that Servia will yield, and Italian Ambassador, whom I also saw, is of the same opinion.

(¹) [*cp. O.-U.A.*, VII, pp. 486-7, No. 8899.]

(²) [*cp. supra*, p. 38, *Ed. note.*]

(³) [*v. supra*, p. 25, No. 32, *note* (¹); pp. 28-9, No. 34.]

No. 48.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 48212/30271/13/44.

(No. 312.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 20, 1913.

I told Herr von Kühlmann to-day⁽²⁾ of the advice that we had given in Belgrade about respecting the Albanian frontier and withdrawing the Servian troops from Albanian territory at the earliest practicable moment.⁽³⁾ The Austrian Government, however, had since delivered an ultimatum.⁽⁴⁾ On this, I had to observe that there was always a risk, when one Power took separate action without discussion with the others, that it might break up agreement between the Powers.

Herr von Kühlmann observed that he thought the Austrian Government had information to the effect that Servian troops were much further into Albanian territory than the Servian Government admitted, and that the latter intended to use the presence of troops as a lever to secure rectifications of the frontier agreed to at the Ambassadors' Conference in London.

I said that, if the Servians approached me about a rectification of the frontier, I should reply that the frontier had been agreed to by the Powers after much discussion and difficulty, and that I could give no encouragement to any attempt to re-open the question. I was quite firm on the point that the frontier must be respected; but there was this excuse for the Servians: that the Albanians had been the first to violate the frontier. When once the Powers had announced that there was to be an autonomous Albania, guaranteed by them, and had defined its frontiers, they came under an obligation to see that the Albanians respected those frontiers. The Powers had taken no steps to discharge this obligation; and, if Servia replied that she would withdraw her troops on receiving an assurance from the Powers that, if she did so, the Albanians would not be allowed to violate the frontier, I should like to know what answer Austria would give.

Herr von Kühlmann admitted that it would not be easy to answer this, unless perhaps Austria was prepared to give some assurance.

He said that he feared the Servians had perpetrated some outrages in the territory occupied by them and I admitted that our reports showed this to be only too probable.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. G.P., XXXVI (I), p. 407.*]

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 36-7, No. 43, and *note* (1).]

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 38, *Ed. note*]

No. 49.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 48925/30271/13/44.

(No. 189.)

Sir,

*Belgrade, D. October 20, 1913.**R. October 28, 1913.*

On receipt of your telegram No. 136 of the 18th instant⁽¹⁾ instructing me to advise the Servian Government to give an assurance that the frontier drawn at London would be respected, that Servian troops had only crossed it as a measure of emergency, and would be ordered to withdraw at the earliest possible moment, I at once asked for an appointment with the Servian Prime Minister. It being Sunday, I was unable to obtain this, so I called upon the Secretary General of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to whom I spoke in the sense indicated by you, handing to him at the same

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 36, No. 43, *note* (1).]

time a French translation of the language you instructed me to use, with the request that he would take the earliest opportunity of laying it before the Prime Minister.

Monsieur Stefanovitch began by repeating to me previous assurances, found insufficient and evasive by the Austrian Government, namely that the Servian Government had every intention of respecting the frontier when finally demarcated by the International Commission. At the same time Monsieur Pashitch was, he said, hoping that the Powers might see their way to make a slight frontier rectification in favour of Serbia, on strategic and economic grounds, and was issuing instructions to the Servian Representatives to approach the Foreign Governments for this purpose. The Servian Government would however bow to the wishes of the Powers should they be unable to entertain this request.

Monsieur Stefanovitch then proceeded to tell me that the Austrian Legation had the previous evening sent in an ultimatum in the form of a Note Verbale demanding the entire evacuation of Albanian territory by Servian troops within eight days, failing which the Austrian Government would take such measures as might be necessary to enforce this demand.⁽²⁾ I enquired of the Secretary-General whether he could give me an indication of the answer which it was intended to give to this Note. He informed me that the answer was being discussed at a Council of Ministers, but that his personal opinion was that Serbia would be obliged to yield.

Today the Prime Minister being again occupied with urgent affairs of State, Monsieur Stefanovitch received me on his behalf and gave me His Excellency's reply to the advice you had instructed me to offer. This was to the effect that the Servian troops had already been ordered by telegraph to withdraw from Albania, and that instructions had been issued to the Servian Representatives to inform the Powers in this sense,⁽³⁾ and to ask at the same time that measures should be concerted which would guarantee Serbia from further attacks pending the establishment of order within Albania. The request for a rectification of the frontier would, I gathered, be dropped as useless in the circumstances. In reply to my enquiry, the Secretary General informed me that he believed it would be possible to withdraw the troops entirely within eight days by means of forced marches. He feared that the decision to withdraw the troops, imposed on Serbia by Austria's sudden and arbitrary action, would, in face of the anarchical conditions at present prevailing in Albania and the serious danger of further attacks by the Albanians, create a great outcry against the Government in the country.

I told the Secretary General that I was certain that this proof of moderation on the part of the Servian Government would be greatly appreciated by His Majesty's Government.

Monsieur Stefanovitch proceeded to say that various accusations had recently been made against Serbia in respect to Albania, some of which had been actually formulated in the room in which we were sitting. First, Serbia had been accused of seeking the throne of Albania for the Servian Crown Prince; then of scheming to bring about a personal union with Albania; then again of aiming at definite annexation. All these charges were false. Serbia was in need of peace, and it was in pursuit of peace that she had been compelled to take the necessary measures to defend her territory against the attacks of the Albanians. The Servian Government had every proof that these attacks had been instigated by Austria, who had brought about the creation of Albania with the express object of placing a thorn in the side of Serbia, of impeding her consolidation, and of weakening her military resources.

Servia, said Monsieur Stefanovitch, had already given the Powers on three occasions proof positive of her moderation and her subservience to their wishes:— (1) when she evacuated Durazzo and the Adriatic littoral, (2) when she withdrew from the siege of Scutari, (3) when she recently retired her troops from the strategic positions in Albania, as a consequence of which she was exposed to a serious invasion

(2) [*v. supra*, p. 38, *Ed. note.*]

(3) [*v. infra*, p. 48, No. 55.]

of her territory. In order to repel this invasion and ensure herself against its reoccurrence, Serbia had been compelled again to occupy these positions. In abandoning them a second time, and exposing the country to a second attack, the Servian Government believed it was offering the Powers the clearest evidence of its desire to conform to their wishes, and it therefore trusted to the Powers to concert such necessary measures as would guarantee Serbia against a further invasion of her territory.

I have, &c.

DAYRELL CRACKANTHORPE.

[*ED. NOTE.*—The Servian reply to the Austro-Hungarian ultimatum was made on October 21 *cp. O.-U.A.*, VII, p. 482, No. 8893. Four days later M. Stefanović informed the Austro-Hungarian *Chargé d’Affaires* at Belgrade that evacuation had taken place. *v. ibid.*, pp. 501–2, No. 8920, and *encl.*]

No. 50.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 48927/30271/13/44.

(No. 191.)

Sir,

Belgrade, D. October 21, 1913.

R. October 28, 1913.

I heard to-day from a source which has hitherto proved trustworthy that at the Council of Ministers held on the day following the presentation of the Austrian Ultimatum (it may be interesting to record that this ultimatum was handed in at 12 noon on October 18th), a decision was come to that in the event of a further invasion of Servian territory by the Albanians as a consequence of the withdrawal of Servian troops from the strategic positions, the latter would be at once reoccupied and the army mobilized on the Bosnian frontier.

I am further informed at the Servian Ministry for Foreign Affairs that Austrian ships have recently conveyed three shiploads of arms and ammunition from Cattaro and disembarked them at Durazzo for distribution among the Albanians.

There is a deep rooted belief here among Servians that Austria is aiming at creating a chronic state of disorder within Albania. I have heard three reasons given for the policy thus ascribed to Austria. First, that she is endeavouring to find an excuse for occupying North Albania herself; Secondly that she wishes to create a constant source of trouble for Serbia, so as to diminish her chances of internal consolidation and keep as large a portion as possible of the Servian Army occupied on the Albanian frontier; and thirdly that she wishes to force Serbia into a war in view of the latter's present exhausted condition, and to put a final end to Servian hopes and aspirations. Public opinion here finds additional ground for these suspicions in the fact that Austria did not wait to consult the Powers before presenting her ultimatum, wishing, it is supposed, to put the Powers in presence of a "*fait accompli*," and then justify her action on the ground that she was upholding an international decision.

Should a second Albanian invasion occur as the result of compliance with the Austrian ultimatum, and entail re-occupation of certain strategic positions within Albania, I believe the feeling against Austria would become so bitter, that a general call to arms, however dangerous its consequences, would be acclaimed with enthusiasm.

It appears therefore to become of increasing importance that effective measures should be taken to obviate the danger of further inroads of Albanians into Servian territory, by the establishment, if possible, of provisional military posts along the frontier. These inroads, if of a serious nature, would set public opinion in Servia ablaze, and create a very dangerous situation.

I have, &c.

DAYRELL CRACKANTHORPE.

MINUTES.

The Albanians have received a good hammering, and are not likely to make fresh incursions of their own initiative. If the Austrians stir them up again, the situation will be really dangerous.

We have written to Vienna respect[ing] the traffic in arms in Albania under Austrian auspices.⁽¹⁾ We have also tel[egraph]ed resp[ectin]g guarantees against a fresh violation of the Servian frontier.⁽²⁾ We have had no reply yet

R. G. V.

Oct[ober] 29.

See tel[egram] to H.M. Rep[resentati]ves at the capitals of the 5 Powers to-day (49262) ⁽³⁾

E. A. C.

Oct[ober] 30.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch cannot be identified]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately succeeding document, and note ⁽¹⁾.]

⁽³⁾ [v. *infra*, pp. 51-2, No. 60.]

No. 51.

Sir E. Grey to Sir F. Cartwright.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 48826/30271/13/44.

(No. 191.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 22, 1913.

Count Mensdorff read to me today⁽²⁾ a long telegram that he had received from Vienna informing him of the explanation of the views of H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] that had been given to Count Berchtold by your Excellency. The statement seemed to correspond with views that I had expressed at Berlin about the Austrian action and it had elicited from Count Berchtold the reply that Austria did not intend to separate from the Powers but that in this instance her action had been the only means of avoiding delay in giving effect to the decision of the Powers about the Serbo-Albanian frontier.

I then observed to Count Mensdorff that there was always a risk in separate ultimatums or action by one Power of disturbing agreement between the Powers; but that as in this case the risk had not materialized, and as the Servians had accepted the ultimatum and as we had not ourselves contemplated disturbing the agreement of the Powers it was unnecessary for me to emphasize this point now.

Argumentatively on the merits of the question the Servians could urge that it was the Albanians who had first violated what for the sake of convenience I would call the London frontier and the Servians might ask for assurances that when their troops were withdrawn the Albanians would not violate the frontier again. We ought all and the Austrian Gov[ernmen]t especially to consider what answer we should give to this request if it was made.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch was based upon a record in Sir Edward Grey's hand of his conversation with Count Mensdorff. It was put into the form of a despatch as a result of the following minute by Sir Eyre Crowe:—

“Record in despatch to Sir F. Cartwright and telegraph summary of important points, repeating to Embassies.

E. A. C.

Oct[ober] 24.”

Sir Edward Grey, who was at Fallodon at the time, had directed that his record should go to Sir E. Crowe, and added “He can use any of it that he thinks necessary for telegram to Vienna, or to Mr. Lamb or elsewhere if any telegrams are required.” In fact, the only alteration made in the record when it was transformed into a despatch was to alter “Sir F. Cartwright” to “Your Excellency” in the third line. Telegrams were sent as follows:—to Vienna (No. 307) of October 24, 1913, D. 8-20 P.M.; repeated to Paris (No. 383); to St. Petersburg (No. 720); to Rome (No. 326); to Berlin (No. 377.)]

⁽²⁾ [For Count Mensdorff's report, v. *Ü.-U.A.*, VII, p. 487, No. 8900. Count Berchtold's telegram is given *ibid.*, pp 486-7, No. 8899.]

I told Count Mensdorff what I had said to Herr von Kuhlmann on Monday⁽³⁾ about discouraging any demands on the part of Servia for a rectification of the frontier and said that on the merits of the case, the reports which had reached me of what to put it mildly I would call provocative treatment by the Servians of Albanians in territory occupied by Servia had made me personally feel rather lukewarm about Servian complaints.

Assuming the crisis of the Servian frontier difficulty to be over there were two points which I thought especially important.

The first was that the Commission of Control should work smoothly: there was apparently some difference of opinion about recognition of the Provisional Gov[ernmen]t. Count Mensdorff said that his Gov[ernmen]t felt that considering all the circumstances it was surprising how little internal trouble there had been in Albania, and how well things have been worked; we ought to recognize this and be careful not to upset it.

I quite agreed and said this was exactly the point—let us recognize the Provisional Gov[ernmen]t wherever its authority was already accepted in Albania, but where other local authorities were working well do not let us upset what was well by forcing the authority of the Provisional Gov[ernmen]t upon districts that would resent it. I observed that the Provisional Gov[ernmen]t was apparently Ismail Kemal and all I had heard of this gentleman in recent years made me rather a lukewarm admirer of him. Nevertheless by all means let us recognize the Provisional [Government] where it was willingly accepted in Albania. But the resolution of the Reunion of Ambassadors agreeing to the Commission of Control had spoken of “*autorités indigènes existantes*” or some phrase in the plural and the Commission had better recognize any local authorities that were in existence and had proved acceptable in their districts.

The other point to which I wished to draw attention was the importance of appointing a Prince quickly. Mr. Lamb, our representative on the Commission of Control, had pressed the importance of this point very strongly. I said to Count Mensdorff on this point what I had said to Herr von Kuhlmann on Monday.⁽³⁾

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

(³) [*v. supra*, p. 41, No. 48, and *note* (²)]

No. 52.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 48930/30271/13/44.

(No. 194.)

Sir,

Belgrade, D. October 22, 1913.

R. October 28, 1913.

I called on the Russian Minister this morning and found him very jubilant over the strong position, which, he said, Servia had now secured for herself by her prudent and Statesmanlike surrender to Austrian threats, and over the odium incurred by Austria by reason of her highhanded action.

Immediately on learning of the Austrian ultimatum⁽²⁾ he had hurried to Monsieur Pashitch and had urged him to give way at once and thus place on Austria's shoulders the entire responsibility for an arbitrary attitude which could not fail to damage her in the eyes of Europe. The ultimatum had however come as a great surprise to him. He had only recently received an account of the interview between

(¹) [A copy of this despatch was sent to Vienna.]

(²) [*v. supra*, p. 38, *Ed. note.*]

Count Berchtold and Monsieur Pashitch from each of these statesmen in turn, and both had expressed themselves as very pleased with the results of their conversation, Count Berchtold, whom he saw the morning after Monsieur Pashitch's departure from Vienna, having been especially warm in his expressions of satisfaction at the assurances he had received. He (Monsieur de Hartwig) could only suppose that Austria had subsequently lost her head.

I asked him what he thought would happen if the Albanians again invaded Serbia. Monsieur de Hartwig assumed quite a Machiavellian expression and gave me to understand that Serbia would then be justified in taking the law into her own hands.

I have, &c.

DAYRELL CRACKANTHORPE.

No. 53.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 48982/30271/13/44.

(No. 196.)

Sir,

Belgrade, D. October 23, 1913.

R. October 28, 1913.

The Servian Press, contrary to general expectation, has accepted with great equanimity and in some cases with approval the attitude of the Servian Government in bowing to the Austrian ultimatum and ordering the withdrawal of the Servian troops from Albania. The only paper which makes some scathing and adverse remarks is the "Pravda," the organ of the Progressist Party (Opposition), which qualifies the attitude of the Government as degrading to the dignity of Serbia, and as a further proof of Monsieur Pashitch's mistaken policy.

The general feeling, however, is that Serbia has, by her prompt compliance with the demand of Austria, greatly strengthened her position vis-à-vis to Europe, by giving the latter a further proof of her goodwill and of her respect for the decisions of the Powers. The sharp criticism of Austria's action by the foreign Press in general is of course to a great extent responsible for the sensible attitude of the Servian Press. The Servian Government, it may be observed, only published the news of the ultimatum on the day following its presentation, and at the same time issued telegrams from other countries in which Austria's attitude was condemned, and Serbia was applauded for her moderation.

The Servian Press now demands that, after what has occurred, Austria should be refused all economic concessions as well as the revision of the Commercial Treaty.

I have, &c.

DAYRELL CRACKANTHORPE.

No. 54.

Sir E. Goschen to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 48705/48705/13/44.

(No. 885.)

Sir,

Berlin, D. October 24, 1913.

R. October 27, 1913.

The Russian Foreign Minister spent one day in Berlin⁽²⁾ in the course of his return journey from Paris. Monsieur Sazonoff arrived here in the morning of October 21st and proceeded at once to the Russian Embassy. Later he lunched with the Imperial Chancellor, while in the evening a dinner was given for him by the Russian

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Prime Minister.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. G.P.*, XXXVI (I), pp. 410-2; XXXVIII, pp. 152-3; *Stieve*, III, pp. 329-31. *cp. also infra*, pp. 53-4, No. 62; p. 66, No. 78; p. 398, No. 450; p. 403, No. 453; pp. 521-2, No. 572; p. 525, No. 578.]

Ambassador, to which the Chancellor and Herr Zimmermann, the Under Secretary of State of the Foreign Office, were invited. The same evening M. Sazonoff left Berlin for Warsaw.

No communiqué was issued to the press regarding the subjects discussed between the two Foreign Ministers and the newspapers have refrained in general from any speculations on the subject; small notices, however, have appeared in various papers stating that M. Sazonoff had expressed his delight in meeting once more the Chancellor, in whom he had the greatest confidence, while the Chancellor is stated to have expressed his great satisfaction at the friendly tone of the discussions, which are supposed to have touched upon the Balkan situation and the Armenian question.

During his short stay in Berlin, M. Sazonoff found time to give an interview to a representative of the "Lokal-Anzeiger," to whom he declared that though it was true that he had received a representative of the "Novoe Vremya" in Paris, the latter had grossly misrepresented what he had said to him, and that in particular the passage of the interview where his words might be read as implying that Russian policy was directed against Germany was a pure invention.

You will doubtless hear from M. Sazonoff all that really passed between him and the Directors of foreign policy in Berlin. Herr Zimmermann, in a short conversation which I had with him the other day only gave me a very rapid and somewhat sketchy account of his personal discussions with His Excellency.

He told me that they had touched lightly upon the question of the *Ægean Islands*—indeed so lightly that they apparently did not go beyond the fringe of that difficult question. Herr Zimmermann had said that if the islands, with the exception of those at the entrance of the Dardanelles, were handed over to the Greeks, there appeared to him to be every likelihood of dangerous complications between Turkey and Greece, while M. Sazonoff had said that if Turkey were to retain possession of, for instance Mitilene and Scio, that would mean that Europe would have had more Cretes on their hands.

Herr Zimmermann seems to have spent some time in explaining to M. Sazonoff that the representations made at Belgrade by the Powers of the Triple Alliance on the Albanian frontier question had not been the result of a previous arrangement between the three Powers and had not been either collective or identic. In fact in making his representation at Belgrade he had not consulted the Austro-Hungarian Government at all.⁽³⁾ The Italian Ambassador had in conversation with him pointed out that the Servian advance into Albania was causing considerable excitement at Vienna, and had suggested that a word of warning and advice at Belgrade might perhaps be useful and prevent possible complications. This suggestion had appeared to him sound; he had therefore sent for the Servian Chargé d'Affaires and, telling him in the most friendly manner that the decisions of the London Conference must be respected, had asked him to warn his Government against any further advance and to tell them that the best advice which the German Government could give them was that they should withdraw their troops from Albania as soon as possible. The Italian Government had given similar advice also on her own initiative.⁽⁴⁾ The Austro-Hungarian Government had in the meantime also made representations at Belgrade couched in stronger terms, and their threat to send an ultimatum if their warnings were disregarded, and the sending of the ultimatum itself, had been merely communicated to the German Government and had not been the result of consultation between the two Governments.

This was all Herr Zimmermann told me beyond saying that the conversations between M. Sazonoff and the Chancellor and himself had been of a most friendly nature and that M. Sazonoff's visit had altogether left a very agreeable impression.

I have, &c.

W. E. GOSCHEN.

⁽³⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 32, No. 38.]

⁽⁴⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 31, No. 36.]

MINUTES.

What was said about the Ægean islands did not apparently amount to much.

Herr Zimmermann's account of the German and Italian action at Belgrade seems substantially correct, except that the German démarche was taken at Austria's request. The Italian communication certainly seems to have been relatively mild.

R. G. V.

Oct[ober] 27.

R. P. M.

Oct[ober] 28/13.

But it reveals the ineradicable habits of the German Foreign Office that Herr Zimmermann should have deliberately misled M. Sazonoff as to the 'friendly advice' given by Germany at Belgrade having been given quite independently of any 'arrangement' with Austria and Italy. Literally, this may be true. There may have been no 'arrangement.' But Germany acted because and after Austria had told her she would present an ultimatum at Belgrade.

E. A. C.

Oct[ober] 29.

Herr Zimmermann's observations as to Scio and Mitylene are not very hopeful as to unanimity of views of the Powers as to the future of the islands. M. Sazonow's remarks were to the point.

A. N.

E. G.

No. 55.

Communication from M. Gruic of October 27, 1913.

F.O. 48828/30271/13/44.

Légation Royale de Serbie.

À la suite de l'ultimatum inattendu de l'Autriche-Hongrie la Serbie a été obligée, avant même le tracé de la frontière, de retirer ses troupes des points stratégiques dont l'occupation lui permettait de protéger de la manière la plus facile et la plus sûre le territoire serbe contre les attaques des bandes albanaises venant de l'Albanie, contrée où règne une anarchie telle que les membres mêmes du gouvernement provisoire y organisent les hordes armées et se mettent à leur tête.

Le seul désir de la Serbie que, lors du tracé de la frontière par la commission internationale, soient pris en considération aussi les points stratégiques qui protégeraient d'une manière plus efficace la frontière—désir que la Serbie n'a même pas encore officiellement communiqué aux Grandes Puissances—a causé le mécontentement de l'Autriche-Hongrie à ce point qu'il a provoqué l'ultimatum austro-hongrois.

Les troupes serbes ont repoussé les Albanais, mais il existe des raisons de craindre que les incursions des Albanais se renouvèleront, car l'on ne cesse d'importer en Albanie de nouvelles armes et munitions. Il est possible que de nouvelles bandes soient organisées qui, à l'occasion propice et sous la direction d'officiers étrangers, entreront de nouveau en Serbie et y recommenceront leur œuvre de dévastation et de carnage.

C'est pourquoi le Gouvernement Serbe, ayant à charge la sécurité de la frontière et de la population du Royaume, se voit forcé d'attirer sur ces faits l'attention des Grandes Puissances, comme créatrices et protectrices de l'Albanie, et de les prier de vouloir bien, dans l'intérêt de la paix entre la Serbie et l'Albanie aussi bien que dans l'intérêt de leur propre tranquillité, prendre des mesures efficaces pour garantir la frontière contre de nouvelles attaques. Le moyen le plus pratique à cet effet serait, dans l'opinion du Gouvernement Royal, l'occupation de l'Albanie par des troupes internationales ainsi que l'organisation d'une autorité régulière responsable et d'une gendarmerie internationale.

En même temps le Gouvernement Royal désirerait savoir à qui il doit s'adresser pour l'indemniser des frais occasionnés par l'incursion albanaise.

25 Octobre, 1913.

No. 56.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 49820/30271/13/44.

(No. 324.) Very Confidential.

St. Petersburg, D. October 28, 1913.

Sir,

R. November 3, 1913.

Mr. Sazonow said to me in the strictest confidence on the 26th instant that Serbia had been more to blame than was generally supposed in the events which had led up to the recent ultimatum from Austria.

Mr. Spalaikovitch had held the most imprudent language with regard to the possibility of Serbia's coming to an understanding with Essad Pasha and combining with him to crush the Albanian Government provisionally established at Vallona. The question of Servian access to the Adriatic would thus, Mr. Spalaikovitch had said, be satisfactorily settled. He had spoken in this strain to the Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Belgrade and Mr. Neratow had thereupon sent him a severe admonition, pointing out that imprudent language of the kind would render it impossible for Russia to give Serbia any support. Mr. Sazonow did not know whether Mr. Spalaikovitch's remarks had come to the ears of the Austro-Hungarian Government, but he thought that they might have done so at least in part.

I have, &c.

HUGH O'BEIRNE.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe; to Lord Morley.]

No. 57.

*Sir F. Cartwright to Sir Edward Grey.**Vienna, October 29, 1913.*

F.O. 49254/30271/13/44.

D. 12.35 P.M.

Tel. (No. 158.) Most Confidential.

R. 3 P.M.

I learn from a confidential source that, when the German Emperor was told by the German Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs that the recent Austrian ultimatum had been launched against Serbia, he immediately sent telegrams to the Emperor and Heir Apparent congratulating them on the step taken. When here, the German Emperor spoke very freely while driving with the Austrian general, attached to him, and expressed his satisfaction at the Austrian ultimatum and that for once Austria had shown her teeth and that he hoped she would continue to do so. I am informed that at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs it is regretted that the Emperor should have used such language to a general, as it is felt that such language is likely to encourage the military party to press for a forward policy in Balkan matters.

Count Berchtold had over an hour's conversation with the German Emperor and I am informed that he laid very frankly before His Majesty the grievances of Austria at lack of loyal support given to her by Germany during recent crisis.

I am informed also that the German Emperor by his language used here seems to have cooled down very considerably in his sympathies for Greece.

MINUTES.

This confirms the impression that Germany pretending to us that she altogether disapproved and regretted Austrian attitude, has throughout encouraged her ally.

E. A. C.

Oct[ober] 29.

A. N.

On the other hand if the statement in the penultimate paragraph is true it proves that there were times when Germany was disapproving of Austrian action.

I am disposed to think that this is merely a personal outburst on the part of the Emperor, who always wants to be on the crest of every wave. None the less it may influence Austrian policy.

E. G

No. 58.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 49521/14809/13/44.

(No. 660.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 29, 1913.

I observed to M. Cambon to-day that the Austrian policy obviously was to turn the international control of Albania into an Austrian control. This policy might result in an absolute deadlock on the Commission of Control and the Commission for delimitating the southern frontier. We ought to consider what we should do in such an event. Had we any real interest in making an effort to prevent Austria from pushing her interests in Albania, or should we throw the whole thing up, and leave it to Austria and Italy to settle the Albanian question? An absolute deadlock might occur at any moment, and we ought to be prepared.

M. Cambon said that he would put the question to M. Pichon.⁽²⁾

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe; to Lord Morley.]

⁽²⁾ [M. Paul Cambon's report on this subject is in *D.D.F.*, 3^{me} Sér., Vol VIII, pp. 502-3, No. 398. *cp.* also *infra*, p. 60, No. 72; p. 63, No. 74, *min.*, and *note* ⁽⁵⁾; p. 141, No. 155.]

No. 59.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir C. Hardinge.

Private.⁽¹⁾

My dear Hardinge,

Foreign Office, October 29, 1913.

I am afraid it is a long time since I have written to you, but something or other always turned up at the last moment which prevented me from doing so.

We are certainly now in smoother waters than we were some months ago, though personally I do not myself consider that the situation is entirely satisfactory or that a long period will elapse before we find ourselves again surrounded with difficulties and embarrassments. The fact of the matter is that peace has only been patched up and we have still many questions unsettled. The Conferences of the Ambassadors were certainly of use so far as they kept the Powers together and prevented any serious friction arising between them. It can hardly be said however that the questions with which the Powers had to deal have been definitely and satisfactorily settled. It is true that we have agreed to the institution of an Albanian State, but I do not think that this somewhat artificial creation will have a very long life. Albania never has been a nation and there are too many diverse and antagonistic elements within it to afford hope that it will be possible to establish a stable state. There is little doubt that before long it will break to pieces and Austria and Italy will then take steps for establishing their respective spheres of influence or even go so far as to annex those portions which they may think necessary. We have further very great difficulty in delimitating the boundaries of this new State, especially in regard

⁽¹⁾ [Carnock MSS., Vol. IX of 1913.]

to the southern frontier. It will not be an easy matter to clear the Greeks out of those localities in which they are at present in possession and which are to go to Albania. Furthermore the question of the islands is still in suspense. No formal decision has been come to by the Powers with regard to those islands in Greek occupation, though there was perhaps an understanding that the majority of them were to remain in Greek hands. Still I have seen signs that certain Powers are beginning to wobble as to maintaining this understanding, and I think that before long we shall find that Turkey will make an effort to obtain possession, either by diplomatic means through the Powers or even possibly by forcible measures, of Scio and Mitylene. It is no doubt true that to leave these two islands in the hands of the Greeks is rather hard on Turkey, as they are situated so close to the mainland. At the same time it would be I think difficult to compel the Greeks to evacuate these islands, and I think this is a step in which we should certainly not join as we have always maintained that with the exception of Imbros and Tenedos all the islands should be left to Greece. Venizelos told us when he was here that he attached the greatest importance to retaining possession of Scio and Mitylene and that the rest of the islands were, as he expressed it, mere pebbles. Then there is also the question of the islands at present in the occupation of Italy. We have received the most positive and categorical assurances that Italy fully intends to restore them to Turkey as she is bound to do by the Treaty of Lausanne, and that she would raise no difficulties in regard to the Powers taking any steps they might consider necessary for handing them over to Greece. At the same time there are many indications that the Italian occupation of Rhodes for instance is gradually assuming a permanent character, and I myself personally doubt if excuses will not be found to indefinitely postpone the transfer of these islands to Turkey. I have no unbounded confidence in the genuineness of Italian assurances.

Bulgaria no doubt will now slowly prepare for eventually endeavouring to regain some of the territories which at the last moment she lost through her own folly. I expect that before many years have elapsed we shall find South-Eastern Europe plunged once again into the turmoil of hostilities. As to European affairs generally there seems little improvement in the relations between Russia and Austria, though fortunately the Sovereigns of both those countries are most pacifically disposed and so far as we can gather will do their utmost to prevent the relations entering into a really acute phase. Germany has of late been making great efforts to be on the best possible terms with us and she has to a certain extent succeeded. There is no doubt that the party in favour of intimate relations with Germany has increased and strengthened of late in this country. At the same time, however, our relations with Russia and France have not been in any way impaired, though I fear that France is beginning to have some doubts as to whether in case of need she could really count upon us with absolute certainty, and even supposing that such was the case whether the assistance we might be disposed to render would be of any great benefit. . . .⁽²⁾

[Yours &c.,

A. NICOLSON.]

⁽²⁾ [The omitted paragraphs refer briefly to a large number of topics, but add nothing of importance to information given elsewhere.]

No. 60.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 49262/30271/13/44.

Tel. (No. 388.)

Foreign Office, October 30, 1913, 1.15 P.M.

Servian government state they have information that Albanians within Albanian

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Rome (No. 327); to Berlin (No. 378); to Vienna (No. 308); to St. Petersburg (No. 729).]

territory are preparing fresh attack against Djakova and Prizrend to be delivered before arrival on the spot of the international delimitation commission.⁽²⁾

I presume this communication has been made to all the Powers.

I pointed out to Austro-Hungarian ambassador here a week ago⁽³⁾ that the Powers ought to be prepared to consider what reply could be given if Serbia asked them to ensure that withdrawal of Servian troops should not be followed by a renewed violation of frontier fixed by the Powers through conference of Ambassadors in London.

I should be glad to know what answer should in the opinion of the gov[ernmen]t to which you are accredited be given to Serbia.⁽⁴⁾

(2) [This note was communicated by M. Gruic on October 29. (F.O. 49262/30271/13/44.)]

(3) [*v supra*, pp. 44-5, No. 51.]

(4) [For the Austro-Hungarian reply, *cp. infra*, p. 58, No. 68.]

No. 61.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 49823/49823/13/44.

(No. 327.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, D. October 30, 1913.

R. November 3, 1913.

The latest ultimatum presented by Austria-Hungary to Serbia, if it served no other useful purpose, has at any rate supplied a fresh and striking demonstration of the change which has come over the attitude of Russia, official and un-official, towards Balkan questions.

In conversations which I have had during the last few days with a good many people here of different classes and opinions, I have met, I may say without exception, with a perfect indifference to the interests of Serbia; an attitude quite in keeping with the composure maintained in St. Petersburg a few weeks ago, when Turkey was engaged in despoiling Bulgaria of a part of her recent acquisitions, and with the coldness of the reception accorded to the Macedonian Delegates who came to urge their scheme for an Autonomous Macedonia. The St. Petersburg press has indeed indulged itself in criticism of Count Berchtold's methods of action, and in the customary expressions of resentment towards Austria-Hungary; but not a single paper has seriously suggested that Russia ought to take any action on behalf of the Serbs which could expose her to a conflict with the Dual Monarchy. As to the official attitude, the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, when I saw him on the 19th instant took it as a matter of course that Serbia must yield to the Austrian ultimatum, and devoted his ingenuity to finding means to enable her to do so without much loss of dignity. I asked Monsieur Nératow what he thought would occur if Serbia did not give way. He said that Austria would certainly advance through the Sandjak to Diakova, which he said would be "*très mauvais*," a very bad business. But I should doubt Monsieur Nératow's being absolutely clear in his own mind as to whether even that eventuality would have imposed on Russia the necessity of really decided action.

It is curious to compare this state of things with the position previous to the first Balkan War. There can be no doubt that, at that time, the delivery of a quite uncalled-for 8 days' ultimatum by Austria to Serbia would have led to a violent explosion of public sentiment here in favour of the Serbs. The change in the Government attitude, though not quite so obvious as that in public opinion, is also tangible and well defined. When Monsieur Sazonow in the Summer of 1912 was refusing with indignation to subscribe to a *pacte de désintéressement* in Balkan affairs because it might seem to imply that Russia had resigned her historic mission as Protectress of the Balkan Slavs, he himself regarded it I believe as an axiom that any definite act of

(1) [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

aggression on the part of Austria-Hungary against a Slav State would of necessity bring Russia into the field. That proposition has in the course of the past eighteen months lost a great part of the authority which it once possessed. In the interval Russia has been brought two or three times face to face with the question whether she would risk a war in order to champion the Slav Cause; and on each occasion she has prudently declined to run the risk. This I believe to be the fact of main importance that has occurred in the past year as regards Russian policy in the Near East. The various causes of dissatisfaction given to Russia by her Balkan *protégés* are minor matters. They afford a convenient means of justifying and explaining the fact, of which educated Russian public opinion is perfectly conscious, that Russia is little disposed to run the risk of war in order to defend the interests of the Slav States in the Balkans.

It does not of course follow that there will be any ostensible change in Russian policy in the Near East. The general lines of that policy will necessarily be much what they were before. It remains a cardinal principle for Russia that Constantinople must continue to be Turkish or must become Russian; and any State which seems to represent a possible menace to Constantinople, whether it be Austria as in the past, or Bulgaria or even Greece as more recently, will be jealously watched. Now as before Russia desires to see a combination of Balkan States strong enough to offer a serious counterpoise to the power of Austria. It is easy to foresee that Russian diplomacy will before long be striving to put together again the pieces of the instrument which broke in Monsieur Sazonow's hands when the Balkan Allies fell on one another; and Russia will naturally be found giving her support as heretofore to the Slav States against Austria-Hungary whenever opportunity offers. There is however an all important difference between the kind of support for which those States may fairly have hoped in the past, and that on which they now know that they can count.

I have, &c.

HUGH O'BEIRNE.

MINUTES.

This is interesting—I think the change in the Russian attitude is largely to be attributed to the Emperor of Russia's aversion from war.

A. N.

Something also is probably due to a temperamental reaction to lethargy after excitement.

E. G.

No. 62.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir A. Nicolson.⁽¹⁾

Private.⁽²⁾

Dear Sir Arthur,

St. Petersburg, October 30, 1913.

. . . .⁽³⁾ I have only seen Sazonow once since his return.⁽⁴⁾ With his usual optimism he seems thoroughly satisfied with his conversation with Bethmann Hollweg. The latter gave him to understand that he thought Germany could induce the Turks to acquiesce in the Armenian Reform Scheme becoming a reality, but that the German Government must be left to choose their own methods for the purpose—whatever that may mean. As regards Austria's general policy and its effect on Russo-German relations Sazonow spoke strongly to Bethmann Hollweg, saying that Germany and Russia only desired to live on the friendliest terms but that Austria's conduct

⁽¹⁾ [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Prime Minister. The endorsement is initialled by Sir Edward Grey.]

⁽²⁾ [Carnock MSS., Vol. X of 1913.]

⁽³⁾ [The first part of this letter refers to Persia.]

⁽⁴⁾ [M. Sazonov was absent from St Petersburg from September 1 to the end of October. He passed through Berlin on October 21 on his way from Paris, *cp. supra*, pp. 46-7, No. 54, and *note* (2).]

threatened at any moment to land them both in war, and it was intolerable that Austria should thus be allowed to become the arbiter of Russo-German relations and of the peace of Europe. Sazonow seemed pleased at having said all this, but I do not suppose it will produce the slightest effect. Bethmann Hollweg of course reciprocated his peaceful sentiments most cordially, but I do not gather that he said anything definite as to taking means to restrain Germany's quarrelsome ally in the future. Besides Germany must understand well enough by this time that there is little real danger of Russia being provoked into war by Austria-Hungary.

I was much struck by the perfect indifference displayed here on the occasion of Austria's latest ultimatum to Servia. Certainly there has been a remarkable change in Russian public opinion towards the Balkan question. The truth is I think that people here have made up their minds to the fact that the Russian Government is very little inclined to run the risk of war in order to defend the interests of the Slav States, and I must say that Russian public opinion has reconciled itself to this fact readily enough. The refusal of the Balkan States to listen to the advice given to them from St. Petersburg affords Russia a very good pretext for more or less disinteresting herself from them. . . .⁽⁵⁾

Yours very sincerely,
JUGH O'BEIRNE.

⁽⁵⁾ [The remaining paragraphs deal with internal affairs in Russia and are omitted as irrelevant.]

No. 63.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 50883/50883/13/39.

(No. 205.)

Sir,

Belgrade, November 3, 1913.

The "exposé" delivered in the Skupshchina by the Servian Prime Minister on the 29th ultimo consists for the most part of a historical review of recent events in the Near East, and of a justification of the line of policy pursued throughout by the Servian Government. I have the honour to transmit herewith, for purposes of record, a translation in French of Monsieur Pashitch's speech.⁽²⁾

Towards the conclusion of his exposé, the Prime Minister dealt with the political situation in its present aspects. His Excellency, while pointedly omitting all mention of either Austria or Italy, laid emphasis on the debt of gratitude due from Servia to Russia, France and England who had shewn a just appreciation of Servian aspirations and had lent them their support. Servia was also grateful to Germany who had striven to set bounds to the recent war and to bring about a speedy conclusion of peace between the Balkan States. Passing to the question of frontier delimitation between Servia, Bulgaria, Greece and Montenegro respectively, Monsieur Pashitch said that the work in question was proceeding satisfactorily. With regard to the Albanian frontier, Servia was bound by the decisions of the Conference of London, and was now awaiting the final demarcation by the International Commission. The Servian Government had frequently made known its resolution to do its utmost to facilitate the task of the Powers of constituting the new Principality, whose stability was indeed of the first importance to Servia owing to the contiguity of the Servian and Albanian frontiers. On the conclusion of the Peace of Bucharest, demobilization had taken place, and Servia had left on her Albanian frontier an indispensable minimum of troops. But the Government of Valona, subject to various outside influences, had permitted the formation of powerful Albanian bands, armed with modern weapons purchased or received in gift, whose objective was to seize certain towns which had not been attributed to Albania by the Conference of London. The relatively feeble

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King.]

⁽²⁾ [Not reproduced.]

Servian outposts had at first been driven back by the suddenness of this attack, and it became necessary to mobilize and advance a portion of the Servian Army which finally occupied certain positions with the object of repelling any further attacks. The Servian Government had then proposed to submit to the Powers the expediency of a rectification of the Albanian frontier in the future interests of Servia and Albania alike, but had been taken by surprise by the Austrian ultimatum demanding the withdrawal of the Servian troops outside the frontier fixed at London within eight days. In view of the fact that Servia had agreed to accept the decisions of the London Conference and that she had contented herself with repelling the Albanian invasion, without endeavouring to profit by circumstances and appropriate Albanian territory, the reply to the Austrian ultimatum took the form of compliance with Austrian demands and an order was issued to the Army to recross the frontier. At the same time the Servian Government begged the Powers either to guarantee Servia against further attacks, or to give her the necessary freedom to defend her frontier herself, it being incredible that the Powers should have created a State possessing rights to infringe with impunity those of its neighbours.

Finally Monsieur Pashitch expressed the deep regret of his Government that in spite of its desire to reestablish confidence and good relations with Austria, some obstacle invariably had arisen to impede a mutual understanding. Nevertheless His Excellency believed that such occurrences would cease in the future, and that the past tension between the two countries would be eased.

Reading between the lines, the general impression of Monsieur Pashitch's Speech is distinctly unhopeful as to the likelihood of a real improvement in Austro-Servian relations, and I have today been informed privately that instructions have been issued to the Servian Minister in Vienna within the last few days, to make no concessions of an economic or Commercial nature unless the return offered is of so substantial a kind as to absolve Servia from the charge of any semblance of yielding to Austria. Monsieur d'Ugron, the Austrian Minister, who has now returned to his post, spoke to me a few days ago with great regret of the failure of the policy of conciliation towards Servia which he had personally been endeavouring to pursue, but which he now saw was doomed to failure. I understand Monsieur d'Ugron is shortly to leave Belgrade, one reason given for his departure being that he is not considered sufficiently strong or energetic in his methods. Certainly no fault on this score can be found with Monsieur de Storck who has been acting in Monsieur d'Ugron's absence, and whose charg  ship has been marked by frequent and energetic administrations of the stick.

I have, &c.

DAYRELL CRACKANTHORPE.

II.—THE PRINCE OF WIED, OCTOBER 1913 TO JULY 1914.

No. 64.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.

Bucharest, October 30, 1913.

F.O. 49386/14809/13/44.

D. 4.10 P.M.

Tel. (No. 188.)

R. 5.45 P.M.

My despatch No. 108.⁽¹⁾

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs told my Russian colleague and me on 28th October that Prince of Wied, who is now staying at Sinaia, would be willing to

⁽¹⁾ [Sir G. Barclay's despatch (No. 108), D. October 7, R. October 13, 1913, stated that he had been asked by M. Maiorescu what His Majesty's Government thought of the candidature of the Prince of Wied as Prince of Albania. (F.O. 46566/14809/13/44.)]

accept the position of Prince of Albania on certain conditions. These, as stated by his Excellency to the Russian Minister, are: that all the Great Powers approve his candidature; that certain Great Powers will assist Albania financially: that the organic statute is satisfactory (I understand that the Prince does not want a Parliament); and that the Powers guarantee Albanian frontiers.

In imparting this information—doubtless by order of the King, whom Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs had seen the day before—his Excellency clearly hopes to elicit the views of *Entente* Powers regarding Prince's candidature.

His Excellency told me that Austria-Hungary and Italy favoured it.

MINUTES.

It seems clear that Austria is engaged in a separate negotiation with the Prince in order to be sure of his being an instrument of Austrian policy, before approving his choice.

If eventually H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] decide to wash their hands of Albania, they will be entitled to say that as regards the choice of a ruler, they will be content to accept whatever candidate is agreed upon by Austria and Italy.

Should H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] however decide to continue to assume any measure of responsibility in respect to Albania, I think they ought not to recognize, or accept the candidature of, the Prince of Wied until the latter has disclosed to them the exact terms of any pact he may have made with Austria and Italy or any other Powers. Otherwise England will become responsible for the policy of a ruler whose attitude and action may be, under the terms of some secret pact, contrary to anything that England could uphold.

E. A. C.

Oct[ober] 31.

We shall have the Comm[issio]n of Control to watch the Prince, and I hardly think we could ask the Prince to disclose a pact which we may suspect he has made with Austria or Italy.

It is really a matter of indifference to us who is Prince—though we are anxious that no delay sh[oul]d occur in the nomination of a Ruler. M. Mano asked yesterday if we had settled as to a Ruler—I said we had not yet been approached on the subject of any particular Prince—but I did not think we should raise objections to any Prince who was acceptable to the other Powers.

A. N.

We must wait till the Prince of Wied is suggested to us.

E. G.

No. 65.

Mr. Dering to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 49519/18799/18/44.

Rome, D. October 30, 1913, 10.30 P.M.

Tel. (No. 186.)

R. October 31, 1913, 12.15 P.M.

I asked Minister for Foreign Affairs today for information respecting Vienna press report reproduced here that Italy had agreed with Austria-Hungary to proceed independently and fix Southern boundary of Albania herself in case Boundary Commission did not succeed in terminating its labours before the end of November.⁽¹⁾

His Excellency replied that it was inaccurate in a certain measure. Austria had certainly proposed and Italy had agreed that the term fixed by the Ambassadors' Conference for the evacuation of Albanian territory by Greek troops, namely December 31st, should on no account be prolonged. As the Boundary Commission was not proceeding, thanks to Greek obstruction, as fast as could be hoped it was to be foreseen that the survey would not be finished by November 30th, and that the Greeks would continue obstruction until they were convinced that it was of no avail. For this reason he welcomed the Austrian proposal, which had duly been communicated to the Powers,⁽²⁾ for it was timely and did not wait till the last moment, in which case it would have appeared to take the form of an ultimatum to Greece similar to the recent one to Servia.⁽³⁾

⁽¹⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 7, *Ed. note.*]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. infra*, p. 59, No. 69, and *note* (1).]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 38, *Ed. note.*]

His Excellency expressed the hope that the other Powers, apart from Italy and Austria-Hungary, whom the Greek Government knew to be interested, would all give strong advice and at once at Athens to cease obstruction on the frontier. It was clear to him that those localities where Greek machinations were at work were to the knowledge of the Greek Government Albanian and should be included in the new State. If they were purely Greek there would be no necessity for Greek intrigues there. Minister for Foreign Affairs denied accuracy of the report that Italy had the intention to fix southern Albanian boundary by herself. Only, he said, if Greece did not withdraw her troops by the date fixed in the London Conference, he feared that matters would take a grave turn, although he hoped to the contrary. In that case Italy and Austria would then be obliged to take some action, the precise nature of which I do not think His Excellency was in a position to define as yet.

No. 66.

Mr. Dering to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 49532/13799/13/44.

Rome, D. October 30, 1913.

Tel. (No. 187.)

R. October 31, 1913.

My immediately preceding telegram of 30th October.⁽²⁾

Minister for Foreign Affairs told me that he had caused explanation of Italy's attitude to be published in to-night's "Tribuna," although he was not certain that it would be very clear.

It has now appeared. After pointing out localities definitely attributed to Albania by Conference of London on 8th August,⁽³⁾ it states that not only Triple Alliance would never consent to modification of this decision, but that Triple *Entente* had loyally and firmly expressed similar views. Greece, and, if not Greek Government, at all events a Greek organisation working with its consent, is doing all in its power that could impede the work of the Southern Frontier Commission and delay accomplishment of its mission, hoping thus indefinitely to occupy Albanian territory and nullify decisions taken in London.

The two most interested Powers, Italy and Austria-Hungary, can clearly not allow themselves to fall into this trap, nor can other Great Powers, in their loyalty and love of peace, countenance Greek action. It is logical to consider localities as Albanian wherever Greek element is endeavouring to obstruct contact of Frontier Commission with local population. Were they really Greek localities, Greece would offer all facilities of examination. It will be equally logical and natural that, should Greece not allow Frontier Commission to complete work, or not finish it by 30th November, no reason should exist why evacuation by her troops should be delayed beyond the date unanimously fixed at London. For reasons of peace all Powers should at once notify Greece of Italian and Austrian point of view that cessation from 9th November up to 30th November of further obstruction of Commission would still afford time to complete labours.

Minister for Foreign Affairs denied to me this afternoon any intention of active measures by Italy and Austria against Greece before 31st December, should they become necessary by non-evacuation of Albanian territory.

⁽¹⁾ [The text given above is taken from the *Confidential Print*, as the original decypher cannot be traced.]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II), pp. 975-6, No. 1226]

Mr. Dering to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 49897/14809/13/44.

(No. 300.)

Sir,

Rome, D. October 30, 1913.

R. November 3, 1913.

The Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs told me to-day, in reply to my enquiry as to how the choice of a Prince for the throne of Albania was proceeding, that it appeared to him probable that the Prince of Wied would meet with the eventual approval of the Powers. Austria-Hungary had originally demurred to his selection and had expressed a preference for a Roman Catholic candidate. The Italian Government had, however, opposed this idea and the Austrian Government had given way. His Excellency said that he was not sure whether the French Government would not raise an objection on account of the German nationality of the Prince of Wied. I gathered from the Marquis di San Giuliano that there is some foundation for the Press reports—i.e. in the "Neue Freie Presse" of October 28, that the Prince is making certain stipulations in regard to a Civil List⁽¹⁾ from the resources of Albania and guarantees in the case of his withdrawal, voluntary or otherwise, after election.

I have, &c.

HERBERT. G. DERING.

(¹) [*cp. supra*, pp. 55-6, No. 64]

Sir F. Cartwright to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Vienna, October 31, 1913.

D. 6.20 P.M.

R. 10.30 P.M.

F.O. 49539/30271/13/44.

Tel. (No. 159.)

I saw Count Berchtold this morning and communicated to him substance of your telegram No. 308 of Oct[ober] 30.⁽²⁾ He replied that his information did not lead him to believe that Albanians meditated any new invasion of Servian territory.

With regard to reply which should be given to Servian Government, should they formulate demand for guarantees against a renewed invasion by Albanians, Count Berchtold wished me to draw your attention to three points:—

1. That Servia is perfectly capable of protecting her own frontier herself, without crossing it.

2. That Servia should be advised to treat Albanian population under her rule humanely, if she desires peace on her frontiers.

He added that he had just received a trustworthy report giving details with regard to awful massacres committed by retiring Servian army.

3. That if Powers desire pacification of Albania they should lose no time in selecting a Prince for that country.

In his opinion Prince of Wied seemed to be the best candidate. He thought that only opposition might come from Russia or France, and he hoped that you would use your good offices to remove such objection.⁽³⁾

(¹) [Sir F. Cartwright was succeeded by Sir M. de Bunsen as Ambassador at Vienna on November 1, 1913. Mr. T. Russell was *Chargé d'Affaires* between Sir F. Cartwright's departure on November 1, and the arrival of Sir M. de Bunsen on November 24.]

(²) [*v. supra*, pp. 51-2, No. 60, and note (¹).]

(³) [*v. infra*, p. 60, No. 71.]

No. 69.

*Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.**St. Petersburg, November 2, 1913.*

F.O. 49767/13799/13/44.

D. 8.15 P.M.

Tel. (No. 376.)

R. 10.30 P.M.

Minister for Foreign Affairs sent for me to-day to speak to me of a communication made to him on 31st October by Austrian and Italian Chargés d'Affaires to the effect that Greek bands were preventing members of the Southern Albanian Delimitation Commission from entering houses of local inhabitants in order to pursue their investigations. Austrian and Italian Governments proposed that all localities where such obstruction was offered to commissioners should be treated as not being Greek. Meanwhile, on 30th October two Powers had made a threatening communication at Athens, of which substance is doubtless known to His Majesty's Government.⁽¹⁾

Minister for Foreign Affairs is anxious to know what course you propose to adopt in view of attitude of the two Powers. He considers it grossly discourteous on their part to take separate action at Athens without previously consulting other Powers. Question arises whether Triple *Entente* Powers should intimate that if they are to be treated as negligible quantities they will withdraw entirely from the Commission. This might, however, lead to results very disadvantageous to Greece. Minister for Foreign Affairs thinks that the three Powers might at any rate express strong dissatisfaction at Vienna and Rome.

(1) [Sir F. Elliot's telegram (No. 189) of November 2, D 11 A.M., R. 4.30 P.M., reported that the Austro-Hungarian and Italian representatives had made a declaration to the Greek Government, holding them responsible for obstacles placed in the way of the Southern Albanian Frontier Commission. (F.O. 49763/13799/13/44.) Sir F. Elliot's despatch (No. 255), D. November 4, R. November 11, 1913, enclosed a copy of the note communicated by the Austro-Hungarian and Italian Ministers, and of the Greek reply. (F.O. 51158/13799/13/44.) On October 29 Count Mensdorff informed Sir A. Nicolson of the decision embodied in the communication at Athens. (F.O. 49446/13799/13/44.) The Greek Minister at London transmitted to Sir A. Nicolson on November 4 a summary of the Greek reply, which was considered unconvincing and unlikely to give satisfaction to Austria-Hungary and Italy (F.O. 50080/13799/13/44.) *cp. O.-U.A.*, VII, p. 528, No. 8950, and pp. 533-4, No. 8955. *cp. also G.P.*, XXXVI (1), pp 184-5.]

No. 70.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 52089/14809/13/44.

(No. 388.)

St. Petersburg, D. November 2, 1913.

Sir:—

R. November 17, 1913.

In the course of a conversation which I had on the 31st ultimo with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, His Excellency referred to the course which he thought that events were likely to take in Albania. He spoke, as he always does on this subject, very pessimistically, saying that it was impossible to take this newly created State seriously, or to imagine that it would be feasible to make a regularly constituted State out of a collection of uncivilized tribesmen.

Monsieur Sazonow then asked me to give him an answer to the following question. If it should appear that Austria and Italy were succeeding in getting the control of Albanian affairs entirely into their own hands, and were preparing to establish themselves as masters on the Albanian coast would Great Britain remain indifferent, or would she as a Mediterranean naval Power object to Italy acquiring a new and advantageous position in the Adriatic, in the same way as you had objected to her acquiring an island in the *Ægean*?

I remarked that I could not conceive Austria-Hungary allowing Italy to establish a strong naval base at Valona and to bottle up the Austrian Fleet in the Adriatic. Monsieur Sazonow rejoined that he was absolutely convinced that in that matter Italy would be able to impose her wishes on Austria. He did not know whether he would be at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to see this development but he was sure that it would come. I told His Excellency that I supposed His Majesty's Government would object to any new acquisition by Italy which had the effect of substantially altering the present naval position in the Mediterranean, but that I had not seen any expression of your views on the point which he raised. Monsieur Sazonow observed that the occupation by Italy of Valona certainly would affect the naval position.

I have, &c.

HUGH O'BEIRNE.

No. 71.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 49589/30271/13/44.

Tel. (No. 390.)

Foreign Office, November 3, 1913, 4.15 P.M.

British representative on Commission of Control has since his arrival emphasized importance of selection of a Prince for Albania as soon as possible.

It seems probable that Austria will put forward Prince of Wied and as H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] have no candidate whom they particularly favour or can suggest they are disposed to agree to this selection if other Powers agree, but wish first to know the view of French Gov[ernment]. You should ask M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs].⁽²⁾

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to St. Petersburg (No. 730).]

⁽²⁾ [Sir F. Bertie's telegram (No. 147) of November 6, 1913, D. 6-10 P.M., R. 8-30 P.M., (F.O. 50468/14809/13/44), and Mr. O'Beirne's telegram (No. 380) of November 5, 1913, D. 8 P.M., R. 9-30 P.M., reported approval of the Prince. (F.O. 50338/14809/13/44)]

No. 72.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. O'Beirne.

F.O. 49767/18799/13/44.

Tel. (No. 732.)

Foreign Office, November 4, 1913, 4 P.M.

Your tel[egram] No. 376 of Nov[ember] 2.⁽¹⁾

I have asked French Ambassador to consult French M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] as to whether we should withdraw from Albanian Commissions, if as seems probable a deadlock arises.⁽²⁾ Till this point has been settled it seems undesirable to make any protest at Vienna and Rome.

It seems to me that we have little interest in settlement of details about Albania concerning which Austria and Italy make so many difficulties.

On the other hand we must maintain our active interest in settlement of Ægean Islands.

⁽¹⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 59, No. 69.]

⁽²⁾ [cp. *supra*, p. 50, No. 58.]

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Dering.(¹)

F.O. 50658/13799/13/44.

(No. 270.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, November 4, 1913.

The Italian Ambassador, on his return from his holiday, spoke to me earnestly to-day(²) of the feeling in Italy in favour of good relations with England. Italy must remain a member of the Triple Alliance, but outside this her great desire was for friendly relations with us.

He then proceeded to speak of the Albanian question. He said that Italy was most anxious that the international control should be maintained, and that the Triple Entente should not disinterest itself in Albania. It was true that Austria and Italy had greater interests in Albania than other Powers, and that it was not easy to manage things with Austria, but it was essential for Italy that the international control should be maintained. The Italian Chargé d'Affaires had reported that Sir Eyre Crowe had deprecated the separate instructions that had been given to the Austrian and Italian representatives on the Frontier Commission.⁽³⁾ The Ambassador wished to know what these separate instructions were, that the matter might be put right.

Sir Eyre Crowe, who came in subsequently, explained that all he had referred to was the definite instruction, given without consultation with other Powers, to declare as Albanian all districts where the work of the Commission was obstructed.

The second point that the Ambassador urged was that, in order to uphold the international control and to make it work, we should give conciliatory instructions to our Delegate on the Commission of Control.

I said that we had been most conciliatory. We had, for instance, accepted Mufid Bey, the Italian and Austrian nominee, as the Albanian Representative on the Commission, though we did not think that he was the best man for the post, and though we heard that he was entirely in Austria's interest. In spite of this, as he seemed not to be a disreputable person, we had accepted him, in the interests of agreement.

I pointed out that the Austrians had wished that Ismail Kemal's Provisional Government should be recognised for the whole of Albania.

The Italian Ambassador spoke in any but complimentary terms of Ismail Kemal.

I said that we had agreed to recognise his Government wherever it was willingly accepted in Albania, but we could not agree to force it on other districts where it would be resisted.

I also said that the separate action taken by Italy and Austria publicly in Athens had made an unfavourable impression, as any action taken separately and publicly by two Powers was bound to do. I did not object to the substance of the action, if it was a protest against Greek obstruction of the work of the Delimitation Commission, but the natural course would have been for Italy and Austria to consult the other Powers about the obstruction of the work of the Commission, to propose representations in Athens, and only to make them separately if the other Powers refused to join.

The Ambassador admitted that this would have been the correct course. He made no secret of his own regret that separate action had been taken without adopting this course.

With reference to the Austrian and Italian statement that, if the work of the Delimitation Commission was not concluded on the 30th of this month, the Greek Government must be summoned to evacuate all districts in dispute by the end of

(¹) [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

(²) [Herr von Kühlmann gave an account of this conversation in his despatch to Herr von Bethmann Hollweg of November 5, 1913. *G.P. XXXVI* (I), pp. 193-4. M. Paul Cambon referred to it in his telegram to M. Pichon of November 7. *D.D.F.*, 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VIII, p. 563, No. 449.]

(³) [*cp. supra*, p. 59, No. 69, and *note* (¹).]

December, the Ambassador said that, if it would, in my opinion, meet the case, he would urge that the date for the work of the Commission should be prolonged, say for a month, to the end of December.

It appeared in this part of our conversation that the Ambassador was very sensible of the awkward situation that would arise if Italy and Austria were confronted with the task of deciding alone when and by what means the Greek evacuation of the southern part of Albania should be enforced.

I said that, when replying to Count Mensdorff's communication about these dates, I had simply said that I must wait till nearer the time before coming to any decision.⁽¹⁾ It was possible that the work of the Commission would not continue in December, owing to the climate.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

(4) [Sir Edward Grey's despatch (No. 196) to Mr T. Russell of November 5, 1913, described a conversation between Sir A. Nicolson and Count Mensdorff on October 29. The latter had stated the decision of the Austro-Hungarian and Italian Governments that, if owing to Greek obstructive tactics the Commission had not finished its work by November 30, the Greeks should be compelled to evacuate by December 31. (F.O. 4946/13799/13/44)]

No. 74.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.

St. Petersburg, November 5, 1913.

F.O. 50386/14809/13/44.

D. 8 P.M.

Tel. (No. 378.)

R. 9.30 P.M.

Your telegram No. 732.⁽¹⁾

Minister for Foreign Affairs has left for the Crimea. Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs informs me that M. Sazonof, previous to his departure, had a conversation with him concerning Albanian question, of which following is the upshot:—

Only questions connected with Albania which seriously interest Russia are delimitation of frontier with Servia and Montenegro and establishment of some Government capable of maintaining order. It is a matter of indifference to Russian Government whether Vallona Government is recognised or another and whether concessions which this Government have given are ratified; and Russia would be prepared, if Great Britain and France concurred, to cease all opposition to Austro-Italian Commission of Control in such matters.

Russian Government, however, wish to know if His Majesty's Government and French Government would not have objections to Austria and Italy thus gaining entire control of Albania and establishing themselves as masters on Albanian coast.

If it is decided not to allow Austria and Italy a free hand in Commission of Control, the three Powers must decide clearly what steps they will take to carry out their wishes on certain points.

M. Sazonof enquired of me on 31st October whether Great Britain, as a Mediterranean naval Power, would object to Italy establishing a naval base at Vallona, a contingency which he thought extremely probable. I had reported this by despatch.⁽²⁾

MINUTES.

It seems that M. Sazonof rather misunderstands the position. The recognition of the Valona Gov[ernmen]t w[oul]d not only be impracticable; it w[oul]d compromise the Commission of Control in the eyes of such public opinion as manages to subsist in Albania, and w[oul]d stultify its future labours. It cannot work with an ineffective tool, that is also "made in Austria." Similarly the recognition of the jobbing concessions already made w[oul]d mean the recognition of the Valona Gov[ernmen]t. The French are already up against these

⁽¹⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 60, No. 72.]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 59-60, No. 70.]

concessions, and w[oul]d probably not associate themselves with this Russian view. But, apart from this, the very complaisance that M. Sazonof appears to contemplate seems to me to make it incompatible with the dignity of the Commission—or anyhow of the Triple Entente portion of it—to remain. It is a case of “*entweder, oder*,”⁽³⁾ and we cannot well have it both ways as M. Sazonof seems to think. It w[oul]d be better either to assert ourselves from the start—which involves refusal to recognise the concessions—or else to wash our hands early in the day. For if we give way to Austria and Italy in the green tree of the Commission, what shall be done in the dry. As to the delimitation, withdrawal from the Commission of Control w[oul]d not necessarily mean withdrawal from the frontier Commission.

We have not yet rec[eive]d the desp[atch] resp[ectin]g the possible establishment of a naval base at Valona. When we do, we had better consult the Admiralty. If we withdrew the Italians w[oul]d certainly have a freer hand for the execution of their designs; but if we were going to assent to everything the Austrians and Italians did, the result w[oul]d be the same if we stayed.

R. G. V. Nov[ember] 6

I agree that we ought to withdraw altogether, rather than allow ourselves to be dragged round Albania at the tail of the Austro-Italian chariot, but all this depends on the decision of H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] as to what is to be their attitude as regards Albania. I think however that if we withdraw from the Commission of Control we cannot continue to work on the frontier commission.

G. R. C.
6.xi.13.

I have always understood that when we talk of withdrawal, we mean withdrawal from all these Commissions⁽⁴⁾ In fact it is the proceedings of the delimitation commission which are likely to create the greater difficulties for us. For in the Commission of Control we have now assented to an arrangement—i.e., the appointment of Mufid—by which the Triple Alliance can, and will, dictate their own decisions in that body without our having any locus standi to oppose them.

Against any Italian designs on Valona we should, even if we withdraw, retain an effective remedy if, as we propose, we couple our withdrawal with the reservation that the status and territorial integrity of Albania, as decided upon at the Ambassador's Conferences, must not in any way be altered without our being consulted.

Qu[ery] Wait for expression of views of the French government.⁽⁵⁾

E. A. C.
Nov[ember] 6
A N
E G.

⁽³⁾ [Marginal comment by Sir Eyre Crowe: “Anglice: ‘one thing or the other’ E. A. C.”]

⁽⁴⁾ [Marginal comment by Sir A. Nicolson: “So did I. A. N.”]

⁽⁵⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's despatch (No. 676) to Sir F. Bertie of November 8, 1913, described a conversation of that date in which M. Paul Cambon expressed M. Pichon's agreement with Sir Edward Grey's view “that if things were made impossible in Albania, we should withdraw.” (F.O. 51255/14809/13/44.) M. Paul Cambon's account of this conversation is given in *D.D.F.*, 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VIII, pp. 576–8, No. 458.]

No. 75.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 49650/13799/13/44.

Tel. (No. 396.)

Foreign Office, November 7, 1913, 9.45 p.m.

British delegate on Southern Albania delimitation commission suggests that in view of difficulties which confront the Commission in applying language test and in drawing just conclusions from such test, the instructions based on decisions of Ambassadors' Conferences should be modified to meet the actual situation. He recommends that the Commission be authorized to visit the whole country under discussion studying not only what they can of nationality, but also the economic, strategical, and geographical features. At the close of such journey Commissioners

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Rome (No. 331); to Berlin (No. 332); to Vienna (No. 313); to St. Petersburg (No. 737). For Sir F. Bertie's action on it, *cp. D.D.F.*, 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VIII, pp. 569–70, No. 452.]

should submit joint recommendations as to suitable frontier for approval of the several Governments.⁽²⁾

British delegate is under impression after full discussions with his colleagues that an agreement on above lines would by no means be impossible, provided it is agreed that neither language test nor working of frontier by sections are insisted upon.

You should communicate above to Gov[ernmen]t to which you are accredited, and say that H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] see considerable merit in the suggestion as a practical way of getting out of a difficult situation and of making the best use of the time at the disposal of the Commission. They would therefore be prepared to accept it, if the other Powers do the same.

⁽²⁾ [The telegram was founded on a report (No. 7, Confidential) from Colonel Doughty-Wylie, dated October 26, Hersek (Colonia), R. November 1. Sir Edward Grey marked the paragraph in the original despatch which formed the basis of paragraph 1 of the above telegram, and minuted the document as follows:—

“It is a good despatch and the suggestion in the 2nd paragraph on p. 4 [i.e., para. 1 above] seems reasonable

Bring up when I return to-morrow. E. G. 611.18.”]

No. 76.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. T. Russell.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 51241/14809/13/44.

(No. 199.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, November 7, 1913.

I asked the Austrian Ambassador to-day whether his Government were going to propose the Prince of Wied for the Throne of Albania.

He replied that he had not heard any thing on the subject, and he asked me whether we would accept the Prince.

I said that we would accept him, and I did not think that anyone would raise objection to him; but it was necessary that someone should take the step of proposing him.

The Ambassador asked me if I thought that France and Russia would accept the Prince.

I answered that I thought they would not make any objection to him.

The Ambassador said that this was very important, and was something that he would at once telegraph to his Government.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

No. 77.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 52097/14809/13/44.

(No. 342.)

Sir:—

St. Petersburg, November 10, 1913.

The separate action taken at Athens on the 30th ultimo by Austria-Hungary and Italy in connection with the Delimitation of the South Albanian Frontier⁽¹⁾ has led the Russian Government during the last few days seriously to consider the whole question of their policy in regard to Albania. Previous to his departure for the Crimea on the 4th instant Monsieur Sazonow had a conversation on this subject with the Assistant

⁽¹⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 59, No. 69, and note ⁽¹⁾.]

Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the conclusions arrived at, as communicated to me by Monsieur Nératow on the 5th instant, may be briefly resumed as follows :

The position in which the Entente Powers at present found themselves in the Albanian Commissions was most unsatisfactory. They were supposed to take an equal part in the management of Albanian affairs, but as soon as a difference of opinion arose between the two groups of Powers the Austrian and Italian Governments took a strong line, and the Powers of the Triple Entente were fain to give way. The latter were thus placed in a position which was scarcely consonant with their prestige.

Russia desired to see a Government established in Albania which should be capable of maintaining order, and which would offer some guarantee of tranquillity to Albania's neighbours; but apart from that the only question connected with Albania which seriously interested her was the delimitation of the Albanian frontier with Servia and Montenegro. On that point Russia could not remain indifferent, but for the rest it was a matter of indifference to her whether for instance the Powers recognised Ismael Kemal Bey's Government or another, and whether the various concessions which had been negotiated by that Government were confirmed or not. Russia for her part would therefore be inclined to make it plain that she left Austria-Hungary and Italy a free hand in the management of Albanian affairs, and that the Representatives of the Three Powers on the Commissions would in future refrain from all opposition to their Austrian and Italian Colleagues, provided of course that the general principles laid down by the Conference of Ambassadors in London were maintained.

When Monsieur Nératow spoke to me in this sense on the 5th instant I remarked that if the Entente Powers took the course which he suggested the result would naturally be that Albania would fall entirely under Austro-Italian control, and I asked whether Russia regarded that result with equanimity. Monsieur Nératow replied that the Russian Government, so far as they were concerned, did so regard the matter, but they doubted whether Great Britain and France would do the same, and they were anxious to be informed on that point. A similar question had, as reported in my despatch No. 333 of the 2nd instant,⁽²⁾ been previously suggested to me by Monsieur Sazonow, who asked whether Great Britain as a naval Power in the Mediterranean would be indifferent to Austria and Italy establishing themselves as masters on the Albanian coast, and to Italy eventually acquiring a naval base at Valona. Thus the Russian Government evidently consider that if the Powers of the Triple Entente withdraw from the management of Albanian affairs to the extent which Russia for her part would be prepared to contemplate, their action may lead to very far-reaching consequences as regards the Albanian coast of the Adriatic, which would, they think, particularly affect the interests of Great Britain and France.

As you will observe, the Russian Government would content themselves with making it clear that, subject to certain reservations of principle, the Three Powers were willing henceforth to let the Austrian and Italian Representatives on the Albanian Commissions take the lead, and that no further opposition would be offered to them by the Delegates of the Triple Entente. They do not contemplate a complete withdrawal of the Three Powers from the Commissions, and from certain remarks let fall by Monsieur Nératow I gather that they would rather hesitate to take so decided a step. It is true that Monsieur Sazonow spoke to me on the 2nd instant, as reported in my telegram No. 376 of that date,⁽³⁾ as if he was thinking seriously of a withdrawal of the Three Powers from the Southern Delimitation Commission but it was evident that His Excellency had not at that time come to any definite conclusions on the whole subject.

I have informed Monsieur Nératow that His Majesty's Government are in communication with the French Government regarding the question of policy in Albania and that you will doubtless shortly be in a position to inform him of the result of these consultations.

I have, &c.

HUGH O'BEIRNE.

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 59-60, No. 70.]

⁽³⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 59, No. 69.]

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 52098/18799/18/44.

(No. 343.)

Sir :—

St. Petersburg, D. November 11, 1913.

R. November 17, 1913.

The Russian Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs told me yesterday that he had information to the effect that after Monsieur Sazonow's passage through Berlin on the 21st ultimo and his conversation with the German Chancellor⁽²⁾ the German Government had taken means to convey to Vienna an intimation of their dissatisfaction (*mécontentement*) with the recent developments of Austrian policy in the Near East—referring, it may be presumed, to the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia demanding the evacuation of Albanian territory. The information given to the Russian Government compares curiously with the language reported by Sir F. Cartwright in his telegram No. 158 most confidential of the 29th ultimo,⁽³⁾ to have been used by the German Emperor during his stay in Vienna, three or four days after Monsieur Sazonow passed through Berlin; but of course His Majesty's remarks to an Austrian General may not have corresponded exactly with the official attitude of the German Government. At any rate the observations, whatever they were, which the German Government offered at Vienna did not avail to deter Austria from uniting shortly afterwards with Italy in the peremptory *démarche* which the two Powers made at Athens without consultation with the Powers of the Entente.

On the other hand Monsieur Nératow told me that the Austrian Chargé d'Affaires had called on him a day or two ago to express the hope of the Austrian Government that the Delegates of the two groups of Powers on the Albanian Commissions would in the future show themselves mutually conciliatory. Monsieur Nératow, while conscious of the humour of such a suggestion coming from the side of Austria, appeared nevertheless to see in it some indication of a disposition on the part of the Vienna Cabinet to show themselves easier to deal with than heretofore in regard to Albanian affairs. The Italian Government on their part had, His Excellency told me, sent him a message of a friendly and semi-apologetic character on the subject of the Austro-Italian *démarche* at Athens, saying that Italy's action had been taken solely because it was feared that Austria-Hungary would otherwise act alone. Monsieur Nératow appeared favourably impressed by this communication, which however seems scarcely convincing considering that Italy and not Austria is the Power most interested in the South Albanian Frontier question.

I have, &c.

HUGH O'BEIRNE.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp. 46-7, No. 54, and *note* ⁽²⁾.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 49, No. 57.]

Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.

Private.⁽¹⁾

My dear Grey,

British Embassy, Paris, November 11, 1913.

I met the Russian Prime Minister at a party at the Russian Embassy yesterday evening. He told me that he hoped that the réunions of Ambassadors in London would be resumed. They had prevented acute differences between the Great Powers

⁽¹⁾ [Grey MSS., Vol. 15.]

and he thought that they would be the best means of preventing isolated action such as that of Austria and Italy in the matter of Albania. He had he said spoken very frankly on the subject to M. Tittoni.

Yours sincerely,
FRANCIS BERTIE.

No. 80.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.

Private.⁽¹⁾

My dear Bertie,

London, November 12, 1913.

I do not agree that it would be advisable to renew the réunions of Ambassadors:⁽²⁾ they are not suitable for dealing with details.

I believe that they are very useful in a time of real crisis and emergency. But when this time is over they are apt to become a dumping-ground for every question of detail. Indeed, they almost multiply questions for discussion, owing to the exceeding facility that they provide for raising any question; their usefulness diminishes; and the amount of time taken up by them increases.

If some large difficulty arises, in connection with which it is the desire of all the Powers to have the réunions again, of course I will readily consent; but I am not prepared to renew them for details about Albania.

Yours sincerely,
[E. GREY.]

⁽¹⁾ [Grey MSS., Vol. 15.]

⁽²⁾ [A further letter from Sir F. Bertie of November 12 stated that M. Pichon agreed with Sir Edward Grey that the Meetings of Ambassadors should not be renewed at present (Grey MSS., Vol. 15), and an official telegram (No. 768) was sent to Mr. O'Beirne, to the same effect, on November 24, D. 1.45 p.m. (F.O. 52471/106/13/44.) On this question *cp.* also *D.D.F.*, 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VIII, p. 573, No. 456.]

No. 81.

Sir E. Goschen to Sir Edward Grey.

Berlin, November 20, 1913.

F.O. 52780/14809/13/44.

Tel. (No. 198.)

D. 7.35 p.m.

R. 10 p.m.

Your telegram No. 419 of Nov[ember] 19 to Paris.⁽¹⁾

Question of Prince of Wied's candidature has been referred to Emperor, who has not yet given his answer.

(Confidential.)

Acting Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs told me to-day that the Emperor has all along been against Prince of Wied's acceptance of candidature, and that it is possible that His Majesty may still raise objections. He added that, although the Imperial Government share His Majesty's feelings on this subject, they could not possibly under the circumstances refuse their consent. If the Emperor still held to his opinion, it would have to be explained to him that, in view of the wishes of Austria and Italy, it might cause unpleasantness if Germany raised difficulties.

⁽¹⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 419) to Sir F. Bertie of November 19, 1913, D. 7.15 p.m., instructed him to "ask for views of gov[ernmen]t to which you are accredited" on the question of the selection of the Prince of Wied as Prince of Albania. He was to state further that His Majesty's Government had no objection. The telegram was repeated to Berlin (No. 398); to Rome (No. 349); to St. Petersburg (No. 758); to Vienna (No. 323). (F.O. 52467/14809/13/44.)]

Minutes by Sir A. Nicolson, Sir Eyre Crowe, and Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 53517/14809/13/44.

Sir Edward Grey,

November 24, 1913.

C[oun]t Mensdorff at Windsor mentioned to me that on Monday (to-day) we should receive a proposal from his Gov[ernmen]t that you should in the name of the Powers inform the P[rin]ce of Wied that he had been selected as Ruler of Albania and that they hoped he would accept. C[oun]t Mensdorff asked me what I thought of the proposal. I said (1) that I was not sure if all the Powers had as yet formally accepted the P[rin]ce of Wied's nomination, which indeed had not yet been formally proposed to them. (2) That I doubted if you would be very eager to be the spokesman of the Powers. (3) That as the Prince was a German subject and at present in Germany (he is it appears at Potsdam) it seemed to me more natural that the German Gov[ernmen]t should be the spokesman when the time arrived. M[arqu]is Imperiali spoke to me on the subject to-day, and I told him what I had said, as my personal opinion, to C[oun]t Mensdorff at Windsor. I believed C[oun]t Trauttmansdorff was making the proposal officially to Sir Eyre Crowe—the latter would doubtless report it officially. (Sir Eyre Crowe is writing a record of his conversation with C[oun]t Trauttmansdorff (which I annex) and also of what M[arqu]is Imperiali suggested to him.)

This question is being unnecessarily dragged out. The proper course would be for Austria and Italy to propose the P[rin]ce of Wied formally.

A. N.
E. G.

Prince of Wied.

The Austro-Hungarian Chargé d'Affaires and the Italian ambassador made an identic communication to-day, putting forward two alternative courses for Sir E. Grey's consideration:

(1) Sir E. Grey as spokesman of the 6 Powers, to notify to the Prince of Wied, their approval of his candidature.

(2) All the Foreign Secretaries of the 6 Powers to telegraph to the Prince of Wied at Potsdam, on a date to be fixed by Sir E. Grey, notifying their approval of the candidature.

The Italian ambassador added that the French were even now raising technical objections on points of form, such as that the Powers must still receive a formal proposal from Austria and Italy of the prince's candidature. H[is] E[xc]ellency hoped, and Count Trauttmansdorff expressed the same expectation, that some means could be found to tackle the matter really and drop all formalistic controversy.

I said I felt sure Sir E. Grey would not like the first alternative. And I ventured, as coming from myself to make a suggestion which I thought would overcome all their difficulties:

Why not let each Power instruct its Ambassador at Berlin to concert with his 4 colleagues and the German Minister for F[oreign] A[ffairs] with a view to an identic communication to be addressed by them to the Prince of Wied at Potsdam?

Marquis Imperiali and Count Trauttmansdorff both said they felt sure that if Sir E. Grey would put this forward, their governments would accept it. I promised to submit the suggestion to Sir E. Grey accordingly.

The Italian Ambassador finally asked whether he could have a short interview with Sir E. Grey to-morrow, and obtain his decision both in regard to this matter, and also on the questions raised in the several Austrian communications

respecting Albanian matters, which he had instructions to support (58297) and (58275) (58279).⁽¹⁾

E. A. C.

Nov[ember] 24.

I will see the Italian Ambassador to-day and adopt Sir E. Crowe's proposal as regards the Prince of Wied.

E. G.

⁽¹⁾ [Not reproduced. Three communications were received from the Austro-Hungarian Embassy on November 24. One, dated November 21, contained a protest against the presence of Servian and Montenegrin troops beyond the frontier line whose details were not settled at London. (F.O. 53297/24992/13/44.) This communication was merely acknowledged. The second, also dated November 21, proposed a representation to the Servian and Greek Governments reminding them of the decisions as to the Albanian frontier reached in the Meetings of Ambassadors and stating that the results of any duplication of the work would be null. (F.O. 53275/13799/13/44.) In this case copies were sent to Sir F. Elliot and Mr. Crackanthorpe authorizing them to join in a representation if all their colleagues were similarly instructed. The third communication, dated November 22, referred to the question of Albanian refugees from Servian territory, and as to this similar instructions were sent. Sir Edward Grey refused however to accord help on other matters contained in this third communication: the question of access to Dibra and Djakova, and the protection of minorities. (F.O. 53279/3027/13/44.)]

No. 83.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Dering.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 58517/14809/13/44.

Tel. (No. 357.)

Foreign Office, November 25, 1913.

Italian and Austrian Gov[ernmen]ts have suggested that H[is] M[ajesty's] Gov[ernmen]t should propose Prince of Wied to the Powers.⁽²⁾

I demurred to this procedure as we have no relations with the Prince of Wied and I have said that the natural course was for Italy and Austria to propose the Prince to the Powers.

The Italian Ambassador urged that this would cause still further delay as it would still remain to communicate with the Prince of Wied.

I suggested that the five Ambassadors at Berlin might at once be instructed to approach the German M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] and ask him to inform the Prince of Wied that the Powers wish to designate him as Prince of Albania and to ask if he will accept the position.

In view of nationality of Prince of Wied and as he is believed to be at Potsdam now, this seems to be the most appropriate method of communicating with him.

You should inform M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs].

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Paris (No. 423); to Berlin (No. 401); to St. Petersburg (No. 762); to Vienna (No. 325).]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

No. 84.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Elliot.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 58771/13799/13/44.

(No. 145.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, November 25, 1913.

The Greek Minister read to me to-day a telegram protesting against the line that the Greek Government understood was being discussed by the Frontier Commission for the south of Albania. The line proposed would give numbers of Greeks to Albania, thereby putting them under a rule much less civilised than that of Greece, which they would resent and against which they would revolt. There would be all sorts of trouble

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

if such a line was decided upon. He understood that we had proposed this line to the Powers.

I said that a line had been suggested in the Commission, and we had asked the Powers to instruct their Delegates to continue the discussion on the basis of this line, in the hope of coming to an agreement. I could not discuss the line outside the Commission. Indeed, it was a matter of detail to be decided according to the merits on the spot by the Commissioners. No decision had yet been come to; but I earnestly advised that, when the Commission did come to an agreement, the Greek Government should not dispute the decision of the Powers about Albania.

The Greek Minister continued to deprecate the line.

I continued to repeat the advice that Greece should accept whatever decisions the Powers came to. I added that if, five years ago, the Greeks had been told they would get what they had now obtained and occupied, including such important things as Salonika, it would have seemed almost incredible.

The Minister contended that the patriotism that had been displayed and the sacrifices that had been made by Greece were equally unforeseen.

I said that I supposed every one expected his countrymen to be patriotic and to make sacrifices when the occasion demanded.

As the Minister continued to press the question of Albania, saying that it was the interests of Italy and Austria that were being considered, I observed that even Great Powers must be allowed sometimes to have interests, as well as the smaller Powers. In this Balkan crisis, the Great Powers had claimed exceedingly little for themselves, and their moderation had been remarkable.

The Minister urged that it had suited them to be moderate, because they had thereby kept the peace between themselves.

I observed that I had not said that the moderation of the Powers was a great virtue, but that it had been remarkable.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

No. 85.

Sir Eyre Crowe to Count Trauttmansdorff.

F.O. 53517/14809/13/44.

Dear Trauttmansdorff,

Foreign Office, November 25, 1913.

After our conversation yesterday,⁽¹⁾ I discussed the question of the Prince of Wied's candidature with Sir E. Grey, and I now write to tell you the result.

Sir E. Grey has telegraphed to our Ambassadors that as the Prince of Wied is understood to be now at Potsdam, and in view of H[is] H[ighness]'s nationality, they should inform the Gov[ernmen]ts to which they are accredited that Sir E. Grey considers the most appropriate method of communicating with him would be, that the five Ambassadors at Berlin should be instructed at once to approach Herr von Jagow with a request that he would inform the Prince that it is the wish of the Powers to designate H[is] H[ighness] as Prince of Albania and they are therefore anxious to know if he is prepared to accept that position.

I trust that this may afford a practical way out of the difficulty. Sir Edward told Imperiali what he intended to do yesterday.⁽²⁾

[Yours, &c.]

EYRE A. CROWE.

⁽¹⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp. 68-9, No. 82.]

⁽²⁾ [This letter was drafted by Mr. G. R. Clerk. The last paragraph was added in Sir Eyre Crowe's hand.]

[*ED. NOTE.*—On November 28, Sir Edward Grey received a telegram (No. 26) from Lieutenant-Colonel Doughty-Wylie, dated November 27, 1913, to the effect that the French representative on the Southern Albanian Frontier Commission was still awaiting further instructions (F.O. 53844/13799/13/44) Sir Edward Grey thereupon sent a telegram (No. 427) to Sir F. Bertie, D. November 28, 1913, 5 p.m., directing him to ask M. Pichon to instruct the

French delegate "to proceed at once to discussion of the line in the Commission without interposing these delays." He added that he did not think that delay was "in the interest of Greece." (F.O. 53344/13799/13/44.) M. Pichon's instructions to the French delegate on November 29 are given in *D.D.F., 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VIII, p. 688, No. 547.*

No. 86.

Sir E. Goschen to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 54553/14809/13/44.

Tel. (No. 205.)

Berlin, December 2, 1913.

Your telegram No. 405 of 29th November.⁽²⁾

Proposal respecting Prince of Wied made to German Minister for Foreign Affairs today by representatives of the five Powers. His Excellency will see Prince the day after to-morrow.

(1) [The text given above is taken from the *Confidential Print*, as the original decypher cannot be traced.]

(2) [Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 405) of November 29, 1913, authorized Sir E. Goschen to join his colleagues in the proposal respecting the Prince of Wied. (F.O. 53900/14809/13/44.) *cp. supra*, pp 68-9, No. 82.]

No. 87.

Sir M. de Bunsen to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 55205/13799/13/44.

(No. 190.)

Vienna, D. December 5, 1913.

Sir,

R. December 8, 1913.

With reference to my despatch No. 189 of December 3rd.⁽²⁾ I have the honour to report that though the Parliamentary attack on Count Berchtold's foreign policy has been unusually severe, and has been supported by the most influential organs of the Press, there is as yet no reason to suppose that His Excellency will feel obliged to resign his office. The German Ambassador tells me he thinks His Excellency will weather the storm, and that it is not so much Count Berchtold's conduct of the foreign affairs of the Empire as the unsatisfactory internal situation that will perhaps in the end, though not at present, bring him to the ground. My other colleagues to whom I have spoken on the subject incline to the belief that, though Count Berchtold would gladly retire into private life, he would probably retain office so long as the Emperor wishes to keep him.

In the two conversations I have hitherto held with Count Berchtold,⁽³⁾ he has displayed, as regards the South Albanian frontier, without any indication that he would yield to further Greek pressure, some apprehension lest the line to be eventually drawn should give rise to local resistance on the part of the Epirotes of a character to endanger, at the very outset, the stability of the new state. On this point M. Streit, the Greek Minister, is very insistent. He has spoken earnestly to me on the subject, predicting serious difficulties from the moment of the withdrawal of the Greek troops, and enlarging on the independent spirit and warlike instincts of the Greek inhabitants of the region in dispute. Should this region be assigned to Albania even to the extent involved in the acceptance of Col[onel] Doughty Wylie's line, M. Streit states that out of a total population contained in it of 220,000, no less than 140,000 will be Greek. He admits, of course, the enormous difficulty of tracing any line that would not leave a large population dissatisfied. I am not in a position to judge the accuracy of the above figures but M. Streit confided to me on December 3rd that he had just laid them again before Count Berchtold, who was for the first time visibly impressed by the

(1) [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King.]

(2) [Sir M. de Bunsen's despatch (No. 189), D. December 3, R. December 8, 1913, dealt with the meeting of the Austrian and Hungarian delegations on November 18 and their attitude to Count Berchtold's policy. (F.O. 55204/53131/13/44.)]

(3) [Sir M. de Bunsen arrived at Vienna on November 24, *cp. supra*, p. 58, No. 68, note (1). His first official conversation with Count Berchtold was on December 3, *cp. immediately succeeding note* (4).]

Greek Minister's arguments and went so far as to promise M. Streit at the end of a long interview, that he would again examine the frontier question, especially as regards to Koritza, this being the region where, according to M. Streit, Greek civilization, and Greek predominance generally, will in the most marked manner come in conflict with the new Albanian authority

The French Ambassador, to whom M. Streit has also given an account of his conversation with Count Berchtold, told me yesterday that, though doubting whether the Foreign Minister would be strong enough to induce the Italians to give way on this point, he was not without a faint hope that M. Streit's efforts might lead to some slight modification of the proposed line in favour of the Greeks. M. Dumaine regards the Doughty Wylie line as being too favourable to the Italian demands, as it stands now. I have already mentioned in my telegram No. 189 of December 3 that Count Berchtold had spoken to me of a certain nervousness which he hears is now felt in Italy with regard to the South Albanian frontier.⁽⁴⁾ He said that, in his opinion, it was the duty of the International Commission of Control to devise measures for the preservation of order in the frontier region. He did not contemplate suggesting intervention from the outside, as this might be a cure more dangerous than the disease. His Excellency did not tell me what means the control Commission possessed enabling them to take effective measures, and I thought his remarks interesting mainly as showing that he realizes the danger of possible local disturbances of a serious character, and is casting about for a way out of the difficulty.

I have told him that, in my opinion, if the Greeks are too hardly dealt with on the Albanian frontier, this will reinforce their claim to favourable treatment regarding the Islands.

I may perhaps mention the principal points touched upon by the French and Turkish Ambassadors, in conversation with me.

M. Dumaine criticizes severely the mistakes made by this Government throughout the Balkan crisis. In their reliance first on Turkey, and then on Bulgaria, they showed themselves lamentably blind to the true facts of the situation. They had now contrived to alienate Roumania, through hesitation to accept as definite the conclusions of the Treaty of Bucharest, a point on which Roumanian opinion was extremely sensitive. The embryo Albanian state could hardly be expected to show real vitality. The main faults of the new Albanian frontier lines lay in the severance which they have brought about between populous districts and the markets to which the latter have for centuries had undisputed access. The recent Albanian invasion of Servia was directly traceable to this cause, and similar complications were bound to ensue as the result of Koritza being made Albanian. M. Dumaine takes the Greek side very strongly. He read to me the other day a confidential despatch from M. Paul Cambon to M. Pichon expressing his conviction that the renewal of the Triple Alliance had been accompanied by engagements between the Allies affecting especially the Eastern portion of the Mediterranean, and that these arrangements would doubtless be reflected in the stiffening attitude of Italy as regards withdrawal from the Islands in her occupation, and possibly in Italian demands for a kind of sphere of influence in Asia Minor. His Excellency, in short, has been good enough to show me unreserved confidence from the day of our first meeting.

Hussein Hilmi Pasha is inclined to believe that the population of Macedonia will soon have ample cause to regret the cessation of Turkish rule over them. He states that 700,000 Bulgarians inhabit the regions annexed by Servia as the result of the 2nd Balkan war. Marauding bands will doubtless make their appearance as in the past, in order this time to make the country untenable for Servia. . . .⁽⁵⁾

I have, &c.

MAURICE DE BUNSEN.

(4) [Sir M. de Bunsen's telegram (No. 189) of December 3, 1913, D. 8 P.M., R. 11 P.M., is not reproduced as the contents are sufficiently indicated above. (F.O. 54675/13799/13/44.)]

(5) [The remaining paragraphs of this despatch are printed *infra*, pp. 359-60, No. 404.]

No. 88.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir M. de Bunsen.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 55668/13799/13/44.

(No. 220.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, December 8, 1913.

The Austrian Ambassador, after I had informed him to-day⁽²⁾ of Colonel Doughty-Wylie's report that an agreement was in sight about the southern frontier of Albania, told me that Count Berchtold favoured the idea of the creation of a local militia by the local Albanian authorities to keep order temporarily after the Greek evacuation. Count Berchtold did not like the idea of an international occupation, and Count Mensdorff understood that I was opposed to it. The best solution of all would be the establishment of a strong Gendarmerie under Dutch Officers, but this could hardly be created in time to replace the Greeks by the appointed date.

I said that, if an international occupation was proposed, I should not oppose it, though I thought that we should probably not take part in it by sending British troops. I should, however, infinitely prefer the organisation of a local militia, if that was feasible. The Commission of Control would no doubt be able to advise us on that point. I regarded the establishment of a strong Gendarmerie as the best solution; but to work through local Albanian authorities in whatever way was possible was preferable to international occupation, and I welcomed the idea of a local militia, if it was practicable.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

(1) [This despatch was repeated to Rome (No. 310) on December 9, and to the Commission of Control, Valona (No. 27), on December 10.]

(2) [Herr von Kuhlmann sent a report of this conversation to Herr von Bethmann Hollweg on December 9. *cp. G.P., XXXVI (I), pp. 217-8.*]

No. 89.

Sir F. Elliot to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾*Athens, December 10, 1913.*

F.O. 55760/13799/13/44.

Tel. (No. 205.)

D. 1-30 P.M.

R. 3-35 P.M.

M. Venizelos tells me positively that the people of Epirus will resist by force incorporation in Albania. He has not encouraged them nor armed them but he has not prevented them arming themselves. He sees danger of defence leading to Italian intervention but cannot believe that European public opinion will allow forcible commission of an injustice worse than the Partition of Poland. He has not yet decided whether to withdraw the Greek troops at the bidding of Europe or to resign. He urges that the question of the islands should be settled simultaneously. If he could show that the sacrifice of modern [*sic*: northern] Epirus was part of a general settlement which allotted to Greece the islands in Greek occupation except Imbros and Tenedos and secured withdrawal of Italy from the other islands and the grant to them of a large autonomy under Turkish sov[e]reignty, he might obtain its acceptance here although nothing would prevent local resistance. But his position would not be tenable if after withdrawing from disputed zone he was confronted with demands for further concessions in the islands and with Italian occupation tending to become permanent. He begs you to have these questions settled simultaneously and at once.

The determination of frontier populations is confirmed from all quarters. They will be largely reinforced by volunteers from Greece. The King told the Austrian

(1) [This telegram was sent to Vienna (as No. 337); to Berlin (as No. 416); to Rome (as No. 371); to St. Petersburg (as No. 795).]

Chargé d'Affaires that if M. Venizelos gave way he would dismiss him and even talked of abdicating and leading defence.⁽²⁾ Would an international occupation of the contested zone by all Powers (not by mandatories) not be possible until it be seen how the Albanian experiment succeeds, in order to avoid certain bloodshed?

(²) [*cp. O.-U.A.*, Vol. VII, pp. 601-2, No 9042, p 606, No 9046]

No. 90.

Sir F. Elliot to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 56641/13799/13/44.

(No. 288.) Confidential.

Sir,

Athens, D. December 10, 1913.

R. December 16, 1913.

At the party given last week at the French Legation in honour of the combined fleets King Constantine was observed in long and animated conversation with the Austrian Chargé d'Affaires. Some days later His Majesty told a friend of mine who had the honour of an audience with him that he had spoken openly to Prince Fürstenberg, and had said that the populations of northern Epirus were quite determined to resist to the uttermost their incorporation in Albania, that if Monsieur Venizelos did not support them he would dismiss him and summon another Minister, and that if the worst came to the worst he would abdicate his throne and put himself at the head of the defenders of their country.

The last threat need not, perhaps, be taken too seriously, but there is no doubt of His Majesty's active sympathy with the Epirotes, nor of their determination to defend themselves to the last. In this they will be assisted by volunteers from all parts of Hellenism, and it is not improbable that officers of the Greek army will throw up their commissions to join them.

This morning I called upon Monsieur Venizelos, and said I thought it a great pity that his Government had encouraged the Epirotes in their resistance to the will of Europe, and had supplied them with arms. He denied having given them either arms or encouragement, with the exception of 500 rifles he had given Major Spiromillios for Khimara. The rifles in the hands of the populations were Gras rifles, the discarded weapon of the Greek army, which could be bought in the market. He confessed frankly that he had taken no steps to prevent these arms from reaching the frontier districts, and said it would have been impossible for him to do so. But neither Greek Mannlichers nor captured Turkish Mausers had been sent there, and he was taking particular precautions to prevent any artillery from being abstracted.

(Count Bosdari, the Italian Minister, came to see me shortly after I had returned from Monsieur Venizelos, and told me that he kept receiving reports from Consular officials of the transport of arms to the frontier districts; his last report from Corfu even mentioned guns. Moreover at a party given by a rich Greek two nights before he had himself heard his host state openly that he had offered Monsieur Venizelos a battery for Epirus, and that it had been gratefully accepted. Therefore notwithstanding Monsieur Venizelos' reputation for truthfulness, he could not accept his assurances. He thought the Greek Government were acting with extreme foolishness, for when two Governments like those of Austria and Italy had determined on such a policy, whether right or wrong, as the foundation of an Albanian State, it stood to reason that they would see it through.)

Being myself convinced that Greece was putting herself into great danger by the course she was pursuing, I said to Monsieur Venizelos that it might be all very well to talk of resistance when it was only a question of repelling Albanian hordes, but had he considered the probability of foreign intervention? He replied that he was perfectly aware of it but his case was so strong that he could not believe that public

(¹) [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

opinion in Europe would allow the threat of war to be carried out against him. Here were people who for 500 years had been resisting not the power of the Turks but the tyranny of the Albanian Mussulmans: their liberation had been effected, and then Europe was to step in and order them to be placed again under the Mussulman yoke. It was inconceivable.

He has not yet decided whether when the time comes, and he is called upon by the Powers to withdraw the Greek troops, he will do so or resign his office. He is surrounded by difficulties from above and from below, internal as well as external. He has a long and arduous programme to carry out, and he believes the Governments of Europe give him credit for moderation, and wish him to succeed. But if he were to accept the European solution of the Albanian frontier question without having secured a settlement of the other outstanding questions, how is he to defend himself against the accusation of not having provided against the danger of being called upon to make further concessions? He understood in London that the points which were left to the decision of the Powers were to be settled together as a connected whole. He therefore earnestly begs that you, Sir, will see to it that the question of the islands, both those in Greek and those in Italian occupation is settled at the same time as that of the Albanian frontier. If he could come to the people and show that the islands occupied by Greece had been left to her, with the exception of Imbros and Tenedos, and that the islands occupied by Italy had been given a large autonomy, although remaining under the Turkish flag, he might be able to reconcile the nation to the abandonment of the Epirotes, although nothing could prevent local resistance.

I reminded him that in a recent conversation with Monsieur Gennadius you had said you thought it unwise for Greece to raise the question of the islands of which she is in possession.⁽²⁾ He replied that he might be satisfied with actual possession without formal recognition, if Italy were gone from the other islands, but her prolonged occupation, tending to become permanent, was intolerable. He begged me, in conclusion, to report our conversation to you.

Fighting between Greeks and Albanians, when once begun without Greek official assistance, is likely to be indefinitely prolonged, and the Italians would be tempted to terminate such a state of affairs by armed intervention, and this, in the present temper of the Greeks, would lead to war. The idea of the international occupation of the contested districts is no new one, and if I venture to recommend it with full consciousness of its many inconveniences, it is because I see no other means of averting more serious dangers. The troops must of course consist of contingents from all the six Powers: a mandate to Austrian and Italian troops or both would be worse than useless. The occupation would give an opportunity of ascertaining the real feeling of the populations, and need only last until the success or failure of the Albanian experiment had been proved.

I have, &c.

F. ELLIOT.

P.S.—I informed Monsieur Venizelos confidentially of the statement made by the rich Greek in Count Bosdari's hearing, and have received from him an indignant denial of having been offered a battery by him, and having accepted it, or of having exchanged with him one word having any relation to the question of Epirus.

F. E.

⁽²⁾ [*cp. infra*, p. 150, No. 164.]

No. 91.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾

[By Post.]

F.O. 55760/13799/13/44.

Tel. (No. 449.)

Foreign Office, December 12, 1913, 7.30 P.M.

Sir F. Elliot's telegram No. 205 (55760 of Dec[ember] 10⁽²⁾).

We may now expect any day to hear that South Albanian boundary commission has agreed upon a line and has thus terminated its labours. A serious situation will then arise in view of the evident determination of the Christian population in the border districts to resist incorporation in Albania.

2. In these circumstances, it is essential that some force should be available on withdrawal of Greek troops and administration to prevent sanguinary disorder. H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] share what they understand to be the general reluctance to employ international contingents for such a purpose.

3. The Austro-Hungarian government have put forward a suggestion that a local militia of sufficient strength might be rapidly formed, and according to reports received from the British delegate on Commission of Control, the Dutch officers appear to consider it possible to organize 1000 gendarmerie in three weeks at a cost estimated roughly at £6000 a month. It is difficult to form an opinion as to the feasibility and sufficiency of these plans on the scanty information to hand, but everything points to the necessity of allowing sufficient time to make suitable preparations before the date of Greek evacuation.

4. According to the formal resolution of the Ambassadors' conference, such evacuation could not rightly be demanded until one month after termination of frontier commission's labours, that is, in any case not before the middle, or possibly the end, of January, and H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] consider the Powers are formally bound to allow not less than this one month's grace.

5. When moment for evacuation does come, the Powers will be faced with the question of the islands, with which that of the South Albanian frontier was deliberately linked during discussions at the Ambassadors' Conference. It will be remembered that the inclusion in Albania of Koritza and Stylos was only agreed to on an understanding between the Powers that the islands except Tenedos and Imbros should go to Greece. Apart from the justice of now giving effect to this honourable understanding, this course will afford the best means of obtaining the co-operation of the Greek Government in a general settlement which will, among other things, go a long way to dispose of the difficulties in Southern Albania.

6. Failing such a settlement, there will clearly be trouble in Greece itself and the danger of further trouble between Greece and Turkey that may re-open larger questions. It is to the interest of all the Powers, including Turkey, that the peace now finally concluded in the Balkans should not now again be broken. A general settlement on the basis outlined by M. Venizelos seems both equitable and practical, and H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] hope that the six Powers will agree to co-operate for its immediate realization.

7. With this view, the Powers should, as soon as possible after the South Albanian boundary is settled, communicate it to Greece with an intimation that it must be definitely accepted, and with the request for a definite pledge that in due course, all the districts incorporated in Albania will be evacuated by the Greek forces at the date named. At the same time, the Greek and Turkish Governments would have to be informed that the Powers have decided not to deprive the Greeks of the islands entirely inhabited by Greeks, which they conquered in the late war, except Tenedos and Imbros, which, for strategical reasons should be handed back to Turkey.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet. It was repeated to Berlin (No. 417); to Vienna (No. 338); to Rome (No. 372); to St. Petersburg (No. 799); to Athens (No. 146); to Constantinople as despatch (No. 456), on December 18.]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 73-4, No. 89.]

Satisfactory guarantees would have to be given by Greece to Turkey that the islands will not be fortified, or used for any naval or military purposes, and that effective measures will be taken for the prevention of smuggling between the islands and the Turkish mainland and the Powers should in fairness to Turkey undertake some responsibility to the extent of promising to use their influence with Greece to secure that these conditions are effectively carried out and maintained.

8. In order to make this decision as easy and palatable as possible to Turkey, it is essential that definite arrangements should now be agreed upon by the Powers, and communicated to the Porte, respecting the fate of the islands in Italian occupation. Italy having given the most solemn and unqualified assurances of her determination to withdraw from the islands as soon as the conditions of the Treaty of Lausanne have been fulfilled, the Porte could now be informed, if the Powers were to accept this solution, that they have decided that all these islands should revert to Turkey, subject to the introduction of a suitable form of autonomous administration under the Sultan's sovereignty, and to provisions regarding fortifications &c. similar to those to be enforced in respect to the Greek islands.

9. H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] trust the Powers will appreciate the conciliatory nature of this compromise, to which, contrary to their previously expressed strong preference for the allotting of all the Ægean islands to Greece, they now assent in the interest of an amicable understanding between the Powers, and which M. Venizelos may be urged to accept.⁽³⁾

10. I request that you will make a communication in the above sense to the government to which you are accredited, and urge upon them most earnestly the adoption of the course indicated, as the only one so far as H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] can see that is likely to lead to a settlement of a question which, so long as it remains open, will be a standing menace to the peace of Europe, and may even precipitate untoward events. It is this apprehension that is the sole motive of H[is] M[ajesty's] Gov[ernment] in making a suggestion to the Powers and urging it upon their consideration at this moment.⁽⁴⁾

⁽³⁾ [*cp. infra*, p. 155, No. 171.]

⁽⁴⁾ [*cp. D.D.F.*, 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VIII, pp. 778-80, No. 621. Sir F. Bertie's telegram (No. 166), D. December 17, by post, R. December 18, 1913, informed Sir Edward Grey that "M. Doumergue concurs in the views expressed in your telegram No. 449 of 12th December." (F.O. 56938/13799/13/44.)]

[*ED. NOTE.*—The above telegram was drafted by Sir Eyre Crowe and amended by Sir Edward Grey and Sir A. Nicolson. Sir Eyre Crowe wrote the following note on his draft:—

"Note on draft circular tel[egram] 55760.

I have laid very little stress on the proposal submitted by Mr. Lamb for the organizing of a small body of gendarmerie within 3 weeks, as a reperusal of his telegram (55913) and the receipt of his previous despatch (55798) seem to make it doubtful how far he himself considers the scheme practicable.⁽¹⁾

[E. A. C.]

I quite agree. I much doubt if 1,000 men w[oul]d be sufficient and still more doubt if in 3 weeks they w[oul]d be efficient. We might be organising simply an Albanian "band" which w[oul]d if limited to 1,000 be easily wiped out.

A. N.

I have added a confidential telegram to Berlin, for Sir E. Grey's consideration.⁽²⁾ I think myself that some appeal on the lines I suggest might well be made, and that it is really for Germany to bring Italy and Austria to reason.

E. A. C.

Dec[ember] 11."

⁽¹⁾ [Consul-General Lamb's telegram (No. 33) of December 11, D. 9-30 A.M., R. 5-15 P.M., and his despatch (No. 43), D. December 4, R. December 11, 1913, are not reproduced as the contents are sufficiently indicated above. (F.O. 55913/13799/13/44; F.O. 55798/13799/13/44.)]

⁽²⁾ [*v. infra*, pp. 153-4, No. 169. The draft was amended by Sir Edward Grey and Sir A. Nicolson.]

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 55583/13799/13/44.

(No. 362.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, December 12, 1913.

The German Chargé d'Affaires called on Dec[ember] 5 and stated to Sir E. Crowe that his Gov[ernment] supported the Austro-Hungarian proposal that if the South Albanian Delimitation Commission had unanimously agreed upon a frontier line, such line should be considered as definitely accepted by the Powers, and not be subject to further modification at the instance of any of the several governments concerned.

In reply Sir E. Crowe said that it seemed most unlikely that any Government would, given the actual situation, wish to alter a line on which all their delegates had agreed. On the other hand, he did not see what object could possibly be served by insistence on now laying down categorically in advance that whatever the delegates did must be automatically approved.

Herr von Kühlmann thought that Austria-Hungary's object was to secure that a definite frontier should be fixed at the earliest possible date, in order to hold Greece to the obligation, laid upon her by the Ambassadors' conference, to evacuate Albania by Dec[ember] 31st. On this point also the German Gov[ernment] supported the Austro-Hungarian demand.

Sir E. Crowe told him of the dilemma in which the Powers were placed by the series of propositions made to-day by the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador to Sir A. Nicolson.⁽²⁾ Herr von Kühlmann expressed surprise on hearing that Austria-Hungary objected to the employment of an international force to keep order in Southern Albania.⁽³⁾

Sir E. Crowe expressed it as his personal opinion that it was not wise to insist on the withdrawal of the only force which could and did keep order in the district before there was any other force to replace it, and said he could not at all understand this feverish anxiety for the withdrawal of the Greeks by Jan[uary] 1st whatever happened to the unfortunate natives, if, as both Austria-Hungary and Italy declared, and as Herr von Kühlmann confirmed, those two Powers were quite determined to avoid, if possible, sending in their own troops. There could be no doubt that whenever the six Powers formally demanded the evacuation of Albania, the Greeks would withdraw. But whether this was on Dec[ember] 31 or some later date seemed to Sir E. Crowe really of minor importance from the Albanian point of view.

Herr von Kühlmann suggested that the Austro-Hungarian Government were adhering to the date of Dec[ember] 31st because that was the actual date fixed by the Ambassadors' conference. Sir E. Crowe however pointed out to him that what the Ambassadors decided was that the evacuation should take place within one month of the termination of the labours of the frontier commission. It was unnecessary again to go into the question as to who was to blame for the fact that the commission started a month later than had been arranged. It was anyhow certain that their labours had not terminated on Nov[ember] 30, and that some time must even now elapse before they were completed. Therefore it was altogether incorrect to say that it would be contrary to the Ambassadors' decision if evacuation were to take place later than Dec[ember] 31.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is based upon the note made by Sir Eyre Crowe of his conversation with Herr von Kühlmann on December 5. For Herr von Kühlmann's account of British views on this date, *cp. G.P., XXXVI (I), pp. 244-5.*]

⁽²⁾ [On December 5, Count Mensdorff read to Sir A. Nicolson a telegram from Count Berchtold laying down the conditions on which he would agree to the adoption of measures to maintain order. (F.O. 55582/13799/13/44) *cp. G.P., XXXVI (I), pp. 236-7.*]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 73, No. 88.]

Sir E. Crowe made it clear, however, that his observations were quite personal, and said that he would submit Herr von Kühlmann's communication to me and that I would of course bear it in mind in dealing with Count Mensdorff's declaration.

I am, &c.

E. GREY.

No. 93.

Sir E. Goschen to Sir Edward Grey.

Berlin, December 14, 1913.

F.O. 56327/18799/13/44.

D. 7.30 P.M.

Tel. (No. 213.) Confidential.

R. 10.30 P.M.

With reference to your telegram No. 449 of Dec[ember] 12⁽¹⁾ to Paris and your telegram No. 418 of Dec[ember] 12⁽²⁾ to me.

I have seen the Chancellor and delivered your message. I also read and left with him an *aide-mémoire* of your proposals. He begs me to tell you that as far as he can judge from a first reading he considers them to offer a satisfactory solution, but that of course before giving a definite answer he must consult Germany's allies, who were more interested in the question. I told him that your earnest hope was that he would not only speak about the proposals to Austrian and Italian Governments but also support them. His Excellency then promised that he would tell them that his opinion of the proposals was favourable.

I have also seen Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, who expressed the opinion that the proposals were just and equitable, and said that he would speak in that sense at Rome and Vienna.⁽³⁾ He seemed to think that the chief difficulty lay in the megalomania of Turkey, which has become very marked since their reacquisition of Adrianople.

Both he and the Chancellor asked how it was proposed to deal with the opposition of the Epirus population. I pointed out that your hope was that if the Greeks were granted the stipulated time for evacuation after the conclusion of the labours of the Frontier Commission, there would be time to devise measures to prevent or overcome resistance. Moreover, the mere fact of the proposals being acceptable to the Greek Government would also contribute to the pacification of Epirus.

(Secret.)

Speaking privately, and not as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Herr von Jagow said that a dangerous factor in these questions was the hatred, amounting almost to mania, felt by Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs for Greeks. Notwithstanding all Italian assurances, he could not get rid of a feeling of doubt as to whether Italy really intended to evacuate the islands in her occupation. I said that the fact that under your proposals these islands would revert nominally to Turkey, and not go to Greece, might render the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs favourably disposed to the solution you had proposed. He agreed that that might be the case.

(¹) [*v. supra*, pp. 76-7, No. 91.]

(²) [*v. infra*, pp. 153-4, No. 169.]

(³) [*cp. G.P., XXXVI (II), pp. 425-8.*]

No. 94.

Sir E. Goschen to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Berlin, December 16, 1913.

F.O. 56773/14809/13/44.

D. 12.45 P.M.

Tel. (No. 214.)

R. 2.15 P.M.

Prince of Wied came to see me yesterday to express his thanks to His Majesty's Government for their support of his candidature.⁽²⁾ He said that he was unable as yet

(¹) [This telegram was sent to Rome (as No. 375); to Vienna (as No. 341); to Constantinople (as No. 584); to the Commission of Control, Valona (as No. 27).]

(²) [*v. supra*, p. 71, No. 86.]

to make a formal statement to the Powers of his acceptance of the Albanian rulership as he was still waiting for an answer from Austria and Italy respecting the conditions which he had put forward as to a loan. He supposed that if all was satisfactorily arranged he would have to go to Albania some time next month, travelling from Trieste to Durazzo, where he would at first reside. As soon as he had given a formal answer to the Powers, an Albanian deputation would come here to offer him the throne; he had arranged for this in order to avoid the appearance of being imposed on Albania by the Powers.

The real object of his visit to me was to express the hope that, as Austria proposed to send a man-of-war to escort him from Trieste to Durazzo, His Majesty's Government might, as representing the other group of Powers, see their way also to send a ship for that purpose. I venture to express the opinion that the idea is sound, as it would be a sign that he became Prince of Albania with the consent and approval of both groups, which would certainly strengthen his position in Albania.

No. 95.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 56773/14809/13/44.

Tel. (No. 424.)

Foreign Office, December 18, 1913, 3.5 p.m.

Your telegram No. 214 of Dec[ember] 16⁽²⁾: Prince of Wied.

With regard to the Prince of Wied's statement that he was waiting for an answer from Austria and Italy resp[ectin]g conditions which he had put forward as to a loan, you should point out to H[is] H[ighness] the propriety of formulating his conditions in a communication to all the Powers who offered him the throne, and not merely to one or two of them.

If all the Powers are not placed on the same footing there is danger of some of them being committed to uphold a prince who may, for all they know to the contrary, be bound to observe conditions which may not harmonize with their position and policy in Albania.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Vienna (No. 342); to Rome (No. 376); to St. Petersburg (No. 806); to Constantinople (No. 535); to the Commission of Control, Valona (No. 28). Figures by post to Paris (No. 756).]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

No. 96.

Sir E. Goschen to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Berlin, December 20, 1913.

F.O. 57359/14809/13/44.

Tel. (No. 217.)

D. 8.30 p.m.

R. 9.30 p.m.

Your telegram No. 424 of Dec[ember] 18 acted upon.⁽²⁾

Prince of Wied does not quite understand, as he said that his conditions had been communicated before to all the Powers through Roumanian Government six weeks ago.⁽³⁾ He had told me that he was waiting for a communication from the Italian Government, because latter had promised to sound Governments of other Powers interested as to guarantee of loan and to let him know result of their enquiries. Austrian and Italian Governments had promised that, if other Powers refused to guarantee loan, they would do it alone, but he was personally anxious that all should guarantee for very reasons which you had pointed out and with which he

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Vienna (as No. 343) on December 24, D. 7.10 p.m.]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

⁽³⁾ [cp. *supra*, pp 55-6, No. 64.]

was in full agreement. He was particularly anxious to have no engagements with Austria-Hungary and Italy that might place them in a different position from other Powers, who had been good enough to support his candidature. In the meantime, he did not quite see how in his present position he could make on his own account a formal communication to Powers which had already been officially made by Roumanian Government and on which Italian Government had promised to sound the Powers.

MINUTE.

I do not want to embark on an endless separate discussion with the Prince of Wied which may result in his throwing up his candidature and announcing that he has done so because we make so many difficulties for him. I think it will be better for us to deal direct with the Powers who act on his behalf.⁽¹⁾

E. G.

(⁴) [*v. infra*, p. 83, No. 99.]

No. 97.

Sir R. Rodd to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 57762/13799/13/44.

Rome, D. December 22, 1913, 8.35 P.M.

Tel. (No. 231.)

R. December 23, 1913, 11.30 A.M.

Your Circular telegram of December 12th.⁽¹⁾

During the past week I have repeatedly asked the Minister for Foreign Affairs whether he had any reply to give me.⁽²⁾

After various excuses for gaining time he this morning admitted that he had not hitherto been able to obtain allies' definite expression of view on which the decision of Italy must to some extent depend.

I urged that there was one point on which the decision was urgent as the Austrian and Italian Governments had insisted on evacuation by Greece of territories assigned to Albania by December 31st. Did he accept your proposal to extend the term to a month after the final decision of the frontier Commission? He agreed that the balance of advantage lay in so doing, although the longer the period the more time there would be to organize Greek resistance and he drafted a telegram to Vienna urging the Austro-Hungarian Government to agree to notification by the six Powers to Greece that she would be required to withdraw her forces by January 18th or 20th. I submitted that a notification of this character, without any counterbalancing prospect of advantage to Greece, might only precipitate the situation which your proposals were intended to mitigate. He then, after some discussion, added to his telegram to Vienna the suggestion that Greece be informed at the same time that, on her agreeing, the Powers would be prepared to consider benevolently certain proposals in her interest elsewhere.

Further than this he was not ready to go yet, having just received an official communication from the Turkish Ambassador, occasioned by the inopportune disclosures in Paris "*Temps*" announcing that the Turkish Government would not consent to the surrender of the islands near the coast of Asia Minor and would uphold right to regain them by war. He added that he learnt from Berlin that the German Government doubted the expediency of insisting on the transfer of the islands to Greece as a part of an immediate settlement, fearing that it might lead to war between Turkey and Greece, but were of the opinion that the result might be ultimately reached by negotiation. He thought himself that Lemnos offered the most serious difficulty as regards Turkey. There might be room for compromise here. He hoped to-morrow to submit an expression of view for the King's approval.

But there is an evident tendency in the Press, which I regard as inspired, to urge, in commenting on your proposal, that Italy is entitled to some form of indemnification for the prolongation of the war in Cyrenaica and the occupation of the islands.

(¹) [*v. supra*, pp. 76-7, No. 91.]

(²) [*cp. D.D.F.*, 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VIII, p. 829, No. 657.]

No. 98.

Sir M. de Bunsen to Sir Edward Grey.

Vienna, December 23, 1913.

F.O. 57855/13799/13/44.

D. 8.50 P.M.

Tel. (No. 202.)

R. 11 P.M.

Minister for Foreign Affairs asked me to call this afternoon, but could only tell me that his conversations with allied Powers had not yet resulted in definite conclusion.

As regards South Albanian frontier, he was personally disposed to agree to proposed postponement of Greek evacuation one month after fixing of frontier, as to which, he understood, agreement had already been reached by Frontier Commission at Florence.⁽¹⁾ He could not, however, tell me this officially, as he was not yet fully acquainted with the views of the Italian Government on the subject. He hopes that in a few days this point will be settled in accordance with your wishes. In this connection he expressed the belief that the Greek Government could stop the agitation amongst Epirotes, if they chose. There had been much exaggerated talk about this. New gendarmerie promised very well. He did not seem to apprehend serious disturbances.

Island question was much more difficult, and he feared that it would not be possible to reply to your suggestions for some time. He could of course give no answer for himself apart from what might be determined as the result of the discussions with Rome and Berlin. I said that the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs' recent speech⁽²⁾ disclaimed any desire to derive territorial profit from Balkan troubles. He said that unfortunately neither Greece nor Turkey seemed disposed to accept the decision of the Powers concerning the islands unreservedly. Turkey certainly was most resolute in rejecting the idea of surrender of Mitylene and Chios to Greece. He did not think that Turkey would even accept nominal retention of the islands under Turkish suzerainty with Greek autonomy. Turkey was convinced of her power to expel Greeks from islands if necessary. He did not see how their obstinacy on this point could be overcome.

I expressed the hope that his Excellency would assist in removing the difficulties as he had done during the Ambassadors' conferences, and would not merely present the decision of the Triple Alliance as a whole.

He said that he could not separate himself in such question from his allies.⁽³⁾

⁽¹⁾ [The Southern Albanian Frontier Commission moved to Florence on December 13, 1913, to draw up its final report and print the maps of the frontier. The final meeting took place there on December 17, 1913 (F.O. 57755/13799/13/44.) Its findings were embodied in a document known as the Florence Protocol. (F.O. 6110/98/14/44) For the earlier history of the Commission, *v. supra*, p. 7, *Ed. note.*]

⁽²⁾ [The Marquis di San Giuliano made a speech in the Chamber on December 16, reported in *The Times* on December 17. *cp.* also the semi-official statement given *ibid.*, on December 18.]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. infra*, pp. 86-7, No. 102, and *Ed. note.*]

No. 99.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 57359/14809/13/44.

Tel. (No. 429.)

Foreign Office, December 24, 1913, 3.30 P.M.

Your tel[egram] No. 217.⁽²⁾

It is true that 6 weeks ago the Rumanian M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] told H[is] M[ajesty's] Minister at Bucharest in very vague and general terms of

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Rome (No. 377); to Vienna (No. 344); further telegrams (Nos. 378 and 345) stated that it was "for information only."]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 80-1, No. 96.]

certain conditions on which Prince of Wied would accept Albanian throne,⁽³⁾ but H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] clearly could not be expected to recognize Rumanian Gov[ernment] on that account as official channel of Prince's wishes.

Italian Amb[assador] has now communicated to me in greater detail proposals for a loan, stating that these proposals were put forward on behalf of the Prince of Wied. The British Gov[ernment] cannot however accept the position that in communications between them and the Prince, the Italian or any other Gov[ernment] should serve as an intermediary. We shall therefore discuss any proposals made through Italian Gov[ernment] as being put forward by that Gov[ernment] on its own responsibility.

The Six Great Powers have done themselves the honour to make a formal offer of the Throne of Albania to the Prince of Wied⁽⁴⁾ and his reply and any conditions he may wish to attach to acceptance should be communicated direct by him to those Powers.

It appears to H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] all the more necessary to emphasize this point of view as they understand the Austro-Hungarian and the Italian governments wish to make their participation in proposed loan depend among other things on the recognition or confirmation of a concession which Ismail Kemal has been induced to grant to an Austro-Italian group for a banking monopoly in Albania. The terms of that concession are now under discussion in the Commission of Control, where it has been subject to criticism, as being adapted to benefit concessionnaires at the expense of the Albanian State, and likely to create a kind of Austro-Italian mortgage over the country.⁽⁵⁾

This being a matter in the settlement of which all the Powers represented in the Commission of Control have a right to be heard, it would not in the opinion of H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] be proper to make it the subject of a bargain between the Prince and one or two of the Powers in connection with a loan which they are all asked to guarantee jointly.⁽⁶⁾

I do not want to get into a separate discussion with the Prince of Wied and shall therefore communicate these views to the Italian Gov[ernment] when necessary, but if Prince of Wied approaches you again you can inform him of substance of first paragraph of this telegram. You should explain our whole view to the German Gov[ernment], when there is a suitable opportunity.

⁽³⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 55-6, No. 64.]

⁽⁴⁾ [cp. *supra*, p. 71, No. 86.]

⁽⁵⁾ [Further information on this subject was given by Sir M. de Bunsen in his telegram (No. 2) of January 7, 1914, D. 8.45 p.m., R. 10 p.m. He referred to notes from M. Isvolski to M. Doumergue on December 25 and 29 "proposing that *Entente* Powers should take decided stand against contention of Austro-Hungarian Government that constitution of Albanian State Bank is definitely fixed in accordance with concession so hastily granted by Provisional Government to Austrian and Italian financial groups." (F.O. 902/45/14/53.) For M. Doumergue's views, cp. *Stieve*, IV, pp. 11-3. Sir Edward Grey wrote the following minute on Sir M. de Bunsen's telegram:—

The position is that we entirely agree that we cannot recognise this Austro-Italian concession as the State Bank of Albania is the proper institution to issue a loan guaranteed by Six Powers: should we decide to participate in such a loan we should be prepared to make this view a condition of our participation, but till the Cabinet has met in the week after next I cannot say whether under any conditions we shall participate. Any one whom it concerns may be told this. E. G.]

⁽⁶⁾ [cp. *infra*, pp. 88-9, No. 104.]

Sir M. de Bunsen to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 58239/13799/13/44.

(No. 204.)

Sir,

Vienna, D. December 24, 1913.

R. December 29, 1913.

In the course of the conversation which formed the subject of my telegram No. 202 of yesterday⁽²⁾ Count Berchtold spoke hopefully of the prospects of Albania. Though there would probably be no objection to the postponement of the withdrawal of the Greek troops from the neighbourhood of the new southern frontier line, a point on which he hoped to be able to speak more definitely in a few days, he thought that the agitation among the Epirots was to a great extent kept going by direct inspiration from Athens, and that if only the Greek Government would discountenance the movement, as he hoped it might be persuaded to do, there would be no insurmountable difficulty in maintaining order in the region in question. The new Gendarmerie was being rapidly recruited and organized. The Albanians were indeed ready-made gendarmes. The twelve Netherlands officers recently engaged were already on their way. The Netherlands Government had agreed to send more if needed. A force could, he believed, be got together in a few weeks sufficient to deal with any situation that was likely to arise. As for the "Sacred Legion," his Department had lately been inundated with telegrams purporting to emanate from members of that turbulent body, asserting in fervid language the determination of the Epirots to die rather than submit to Albanian rule. The tone of these messages was, however, so obviously exaggerated, and their very composition so forced and unnatural, that he gave very little credence to them. The German Ambassador holds similar language when speaking of Southern Albania. He said to me a few days ago that he was little moved by the Greek complaint that 140,000 Greeks would be forced by the adoption of the new frontier into subjection to the Albanians.⁽³⁾ There were perhaps three or four hundred thousand Albanians and a still larger number of Bulgarians living within the limits of Servia as at present defined. The new Bulgaria contained a considerable Greek population and the new Greece a considerable Bulgarian population. It was impossible to partition the Balkans in entire conformity with race distribution. Albania, as now defined would, he believed, be able to keep her head above water. M. de Tschirschky understood that about 15 millions of crowns a year (£625,000) would be required to govern the country. Of this annual sum he did not think that at present Albania could herself find more than a third. The sum he had mentioned would not include interest on loans, except perhaps on the initial loan which the Prince of Wied would require to enable him to make a start. He was not able to suggest in what way the deficit should be made good.

Count Berchtold also touched on the financial difficulty in Albania and said no doubt it was high time the Prince of Wied should make his demands known to all the Powers concerned, as this was a question not concerning only Austria-Hungary and Italy, to which Powers the Prince had already addressed himself. His Excellency mentioned 10 millions [crowns] (£416,000) a year as being probably sufficient to meet the cost of administering the country. He thought too much money should not be advanced for this purpose for fear of encouraging extravagance. The country had some resources, and there was the Customs revenue. In the course of time it ought to be able to pay its own way. The loan question was of course a difficulty.

The Vienna Press has been for some time at pains to show that Albania is settling down quietly to the idea of being governed as a united country. Tribes hitherto independent of all control are said to be giving their adhesion to the national Government at Valona. The speedy formation of the nucleus of a national gendarmerie is

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe; to Lord Morley.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 82, No. 98.]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp. 71-2, No. 87.]

favourably commented on. The agitation along the southern frontier is treated as being mainly artificial, and not to be taken seriously. The inference, perhaps, is intended to be drawn that the new southern frontier of Albania does not constitute a grievance for Greece of a character to justify Greece in demanding compensation elsewhere.

I have, &c.

MAURICE DE BUNSEN.

MINUTES.

It seems to me difficult to justify heavy financial sacrifices and liabilities on the part of the British government for the sake of a country like Albania in which we have no real direct interest. It is moreover almost certain that the provision of ways and means for the government of Albania will prove exceedingly difficult. We are likely in any case to find ourselves saddled with heavy expenditure on account of the gendarmerie.

In these circumstances the question will before long arise and require consideration, whether H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] should not take the opportunity of this inevitable demand for financial assistance to a country practically devoid of assets, in order to withdraw altogether, leaving the field free to Austria and Italy.

So long as we remain in Albania, we are bound to demand that our voice shall be heard in the settlement of important questions of government and administration. Great Britain cannot afford to do what Germany does in this and similar situations: share nominally and outwardly in the responsibility for purely Austro-Italian measures and schemes which are not right and square nor in conformity with the real interests of an independent Albania, whilst really disapproving those measures and schemes. Our prestige and good name would be gravely affected if we played the part of blindly but actively supporting a purely selfish Austro-Italian policy of aggression and absorption in Albania. The whole position of Great Britain in the world rests largely on the confidence she has earned that, at least with questions not touching her own vital interests, she deals strictly on their merits according to the generally accepted standards of right and wrong.

To this principle it is important that we should adhere in Albania so long as we undertake any responsibility for the good government of that country by being represented on the Committee of Control. This is however bound to bring us into constant opposition to Austria and Italy, whose policy is to make of Albania a private preserve of their own, and whose methods and dealings are strangely discordant with our views and practice. There will consequently always be friction between us and those two Powers—and therefore with Germany also—so long as we continue to take a hand in Albanian affairs. And this friction will become accentuated if we undertake to subsidize the Albanian government either by engaging our financial credit, or by making grants from the British exchequer. Our responsibility for securing an efficient and pure administration would be increased, and the necessity of asserting ourselves for this purpose in the direction of the internal affairs of Albania would become more imperative.

The only policy that England can *actively* pursue in Albania is to work for the establishment of a good government whilst upholding its independence. The interest of Austria and Italy in good government in Albania is subordinate to the principle that there must be no real independence, but rather absolute and exclusive dependence upon themselves. This latter policy we could *passively* support by leaving Albania alone and then merely not opposing Austria and Italy in their schemes. But such passive support is not compatible with our remaining represented on the Committee of Control.

The question of the proposed Albanian loan seems to me to raise in a very acute, but also a rather convenient, form the issue: whether we should continue to share in the actual government of the country or whether we should withdraw altogether.

Is it worth our while, or is it good policy, for the sake of securing for an independent Albania a better and juster government than she could perhaps hope to get without us, to perpetuate causes of friction between us and the triple alliance, and indirectly to strengthen the ties which bind Italy to her two partners? Or would it be better to cease our altruistic efforts for the good of Albania, thereby diminishing the friction, whilst indirectly loosening those ties by leaving Austria and Italy to face each other alone in Albania and forcing Germany to take sides between them, instead of being able to back their joint aims?

The question is not calling for an immediate decision, but deserves careful consideration when the pros and cons of an Albanian loan are discussed, which must be done before long.

E. A. C.

Dec[ember] 31.

My own inclination is in accord with Sir E. Crowe's Minute and I would come to that decision and act upon it at once, if Russia and France had not to be considered.

The question of a loan will provide the opportunity for sounding them.

E. G.

No. 101.

*Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.**St. Petersburg, December 26, 1913.*

F.O. 57980/14809/13/44.

D. 9 P.M.

Tel. (No. 427.)

R. 10.30 P.M.

M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] gave me to-day reply which he had returned to an aide-mémoire from the Austrian Embassy, informing him that the Prince of Wied had expressed his readiness to accept Albanian throne on condition that Powers guaranteed loan of £3,000,000 of which the first instalment of £800,000 was to be advanced at once.

Reply states that Russian Gov[ernment]t consider question of loan comes within competence of Commission of Control in strict conformity with decision taken by the Powers in London. While ready to enter into an exchange of views with other cabinets with regard to amount of loan, Russian Gov[ernment]t would point out that they have not yet received reply from the prince specifying conditions on which he would accept proposal made to him by the Powers.

M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] told me that he had informed Austrian Ch[argé] d'A[ffaires] that Prince ought to address to all the Powers a declaration similar to that which he had made to the Austrian Gov[ernment]t.⁽¹⁾ H[is] E[xc]cellency hopes that H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] will concur in the above views. He added that he did not think that the Minister of Finance would make difficulties about guaranteeing the loan and supposed that money would have to be found at Paris.

⁽¹⁾ [Telegrams (No. 429) to Berlin and (No. 809) to St. Petersburg were sent to say that the British Government entirely shared the view that the Prince of Wied should address himself direct to all the Powers concerned. (F.O. 57980/14809/13/44.) *cp. supra*, pp. 82-3, No. 99 *cp* also *O.-U.A.*, VII, p. 677, No. 9123; pp. 678-9, No. 9126; pp. 727-8, No. 9185.]

No. 102.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir M. de Bunsen.

F.O. 57855/13799/13/44.

Tel. (No. 346.)

Foreign Office, December 27, 1913, 2.45 P.M.

Your telegram No. 202 (57855 of Dec[ember] 23⁽¹⁾).

Your Excellency should point out to Count Berchtold that our proposal was intended to settle two difficult questions together which it was understood during the ambassadors' conference were interdependent, and that agreement on one point will not be effective by itself. If therefore the question of the islands is to be shelved, for some time, the settlement of the South Albanian frontier will be imperilled; for it was on the understanding that Greece would keep the islands in her occupation, except Tenedos and Imbros, that an agreement to assign Koritza and Stylos to Albania was reached.

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 82, No 98]

[*ED. NOTE.*—On December 31, Prince Lichnowsky, the Marquis Imperiali, and Count Trauttmansdorff made an identic communication (*v.* immediately succeeding document) in reply to Sir Edward Grey's proposals of December 12 (*v. supra*, pp. 76-7, No. 91). The text is given in *G.P.*, XXXVI (II), pp. 454-6, and *O.-U.A.*, VII, pp. 699-700, No. 9146. The substance of the communication was sent to Sir F. Bertie (telegram No. 3) and Sir G. Buchanan (telegram No. 4) on January 2, 1914, D. 4 P.M. (F.O. 58804/13799/13/44.) The communication referred only to the Albanian frontier question, the reply concerning the *Ægean* Islands being reserved for a later date. (*cp. infra*, p. 190, No. 203)

The following minutes appear on the Italian communication (F O. 58805/13799/13/44):—

MINUTES

An identical communication was made to-day by the German Ambassador, and the Austro-Hungarian Chargé d'Affaires

They all added verbally that there was no desire on the part of their governments to defer an answer respecting the islands to the Greek Kalends; in fact the 3 governments were in active communication on the subject, and hoped to submit a "conciliatory answer" before long. But meanwhile the question of Greek evacuation was so urgent that they had thought it best to communicate their views at once to H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment].

I pointed out in conversation with each of the 3 Representatives that Sir E. Grey had endeavoured in his proposal to explain quite clearly why he must insist on treating the two questions of the South Albanian frontier and of the Greek Islands as interdependent. I did not think it would be possible for him to join in any representation to Greece which whilst demanding evacuation, contained nothing but a promise of benevolent consideration of the linked question of the islands. If therefore the Triple Alliance governments attached such importance to immediate evacuation by Greece, it would be most desirable that their promised further communication respecting the islands should reach H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] in good time before the 18th.

I also said that, whilst Sir E. Grey would no doubt be very glad to learn that the 3 governments agreed to Jan[uary] 18, as the date for Greek evacuation, H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] could hardly regard this as a great "concession" on the part of the Triple Alliance, since, as he had pointed out in putting forward his proposal the adoption of the earlier date at first contemplated by them would not have been in accordance with the understanding embodied in the resolutions of the ambassadors' conference.

All the 3 Representatives professed complete ignorance as to what were the difficulties in the way of our proposal respecting the islands being accepted, and said that speaking for themselves, they regarded the solution we had suggested as quite reasonable. They thought it possible that regard for the feelings of Turkey was influencing their governments. Prince Lichnowsky said it was only a question of finding a proper formula.

M. de Fleuriau called and asked whether I could inform him of the answer given by the Triple Alliance, and I promised to let him have a copy, adding that I relied on its not finding its way into the public press.

I also mentioned the substance to M. de Etter.

Query:

Send copies to our 6 Embassies.

E. A. C.

December 31

E. G.

My answer will be that given by Sir E. Crowe. I will discuss it with him when I return on Monday morning.

E. G.

1.1.14.

In accordance with Sir Eyre Crowe's suggestion copies of the communication were sent, on January 5, 1914, to Constantinople (as No. 1); to Paris (as No. 7); to Berlin (as No. 5); to Rome (as No. 3); to Vienna (as No. 1); to St. Petersburg (as No. 5).]

No. 108.

Communication from Prince Lichnowsky of December 31, 1913.

F.O. 58804/13799/13/44.

Aide Mémoire.

Ayant pris connaissance de la proposition de Sir Edward Grey datée du 12 décembre c[ou]r[ante]⁽¹⁾ le cabinet de Berlin, pour faire preuve de l'esprit de conciliation dont il est animé, se déclare disposé à consentir à ce que le terme de l'évacuation du territoire albanais par les troupes grecques soit prorogé au 18 janvier prochain, c'est à dire à trente jours après la conclusion des travaux de la commission de délimitation de la frontière méridionale.

Toutefois le cabinet de Berlin ne saurait se dissimuler les dangers que pourrait entraîner cette prorogation du terme de l'évacuation vu que ce nouveau laps de temps pourrait faciliter aux agitateurs l'organisation de troubles dangereux dans les contrées en question.

(1) [*v. supra*, pp. 76-7, No. 91.]

Partant, le Gouvernement Impérial juge indispensable que les six Grandes Puissances adressent une communication au Gouvernement Royal Grec pour lui enjoindre l'évacuation du territoire albanais à la date susmentionnée et le rendre responsable des éventuels désordres qui pourraient s'y produire. Les Puissances pourraient, à cette occasion, faire savoir au Gouvernement Hellénique que, dans le cas où celui-ci s'empresserait de se conformer à ces décisions, il sera tenu compte avec bienveillance de son attitude, dans l'examen des différentes questions, dans lesquelles des intérêts helléniques se trouvent engagés.

Le Gouvernement Impérial, vu l'urgence d'un accord sur le terme de l'évacuation, attache prix à faire connaître dès maintenant au cabinet de Londres son point de vue ci-dessus exposé qui va à l'encontre de la proposition de Sir Edward Grey et se réserve de revenir sur la question des îles.⁽²⁾

⁽²⁾ [The subsequent communication on the question of the Aegean Islands is given *infra*, p 190, No. 203.]

[*ED. NOTE.*—Sir E. Goschen's despatch (No. 4), D. January 3, 1914, R. January 5, enclosed a copy of a letter from Herr von Jagow transmitting a communication from the Prince of Wied detailing the conditions on which he was ready to accept the throne of Albania (F.O. 480/146/14/43.) The full text is printed in *G.P.*, XXXVI (I), pp 325-6. On January 12, Sir Edward Grey sent a despatch (No. 13) to Sir F. Bertie, and (No. 11) to Sir G. Buchanan, commenting on the conditions, and directing that French and Russian views should be requested. (F.O. 480/146/14/53.)]

No. 104.

Memorandum for circulation to the Cabinet.

F.O. 58014/14809/13/44.

January 6, 1914.

Prince William of Wied has expressed his readiness to accept the offer of the throne of Albania on certain conditions, one of which is, that financial assistance shall be afforded to that country for the organisation of an efficient administration, and for economic purposes. It is suggested that the loan should be guaranteed by the six Great Powers, under whose aegis the independent State of Albania has been created, and the amount required has been estimated by the prince at 75 million francs (£9,000,000) of which he urges that 20 million francs (£800,000) should be put at his disposal on his taking over the Government of the Principality to meet pressing needs and to balance the budget.

In event of unwillingness on the part of the other Powers to guarantee such a loan the Austro-Hungarian and Italian Governments have intimated that they would be prepared to guarantee it jointly between them.

A loan is undoubtedly indispensable, and so long as His Majesty's Government continue to take their share of responsibility for the good government of Albania through the British delegate on the Commission of Control set up in accordance with the recommendation of the Ambassadors' Conference of last year, it would be desirable that the loan should be guaranteed by all the Powers and not by Austria and Italy alone whose policy it is to reduce Albania to the state of a special preserve of their own.

It would no doubt be made a condition of any loan guaranteed by the six Powers that the expenditure of its proceeds should be supervised by the Commission of Control, but difficulties might arise in the case of a purely Austro-Italian loan which might tend to place the delegates on that Commission of the non-guaranteeing Powers in a false position, and might ultimately compel those Powers to withdraw altogether from their position of responsibility in Albania.

In view of the seriousness of the issues thus involved, it is important that His Majesty's Government should be in a position to declare as soon as possible whether they are willing to participate in the guarantee if the other five Great Powers do the same.

I should propose that His Majesty's Government should state that they will join in the guarantee of the loan but only on condition that the other five Powers all do the same.

[*ED. NOTE.*—On January 10, 1914, Sir Edward Grey received a telegram (No. 7) from Consul-General Lamb, D. January 9, 9 P.M., in the following terms:—

“In view of the critical situation on all sides my Austrian and Italian Colleagues are asking for more men of war for the Albanian ports. My French and Russian Colleagues agree that the participation of the other Powers is desirable.”

The adherents of Essad Pasha had advanced on Elbassan and fighting began there on the 9th. Bekir Bey had been arrested at Valona on the 8th, and papers in his possession seemed to show the complicity of the Ottoman Government. Sir Edward Grey replied to Consul-General Lamb that he was “consulting with French and Russian Gov[er]nmen[ts] as to despatch of a ship,” telegram (No. 9) of January 10, D. 3.15 P.M., and telegrams were sent accordingly on the same day to Sir F. Bertie (No. 14) and Sir G. Buchanan (No. 11). (F.O. 1281/769/14/53.) *cp. also G.P., XXXVI (I), pp. 332-44*

Consul-General Lamb made further reports on the seriousness of the situation in his despatch (No. 10), D. January 12, R. January 19, and despatch (No. 15), D. January 16, R. January 23. (F.O. 2534/769/14/53; F.O. 3189/769/14/53) These documents are not reproduced from considerations of space *cp. infra*, p. 96, No. 111, and *note* (2)]

No. 105.

Sir R. Rodd to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 2715/45/14/53.

(No. 24.)

Sir:—

Rome, D. January 15, 1914.

R. January 20, 1914.

I have the honour to report that, having received late last night from the Minister for Foreign Affairs the text of the reply to your proposals regarding the *Ægean* islands,⁽¹⁾ which the Italian Ambassador in London had been instructed to communicate, I called upon His Excellency this morning to thank him, and to discuss one or two points which appeared to me to require some further elucidation. I have reported his explanations by telegraph.⁽²⁾ He at the same time informed me that a reference to the island of Lemnos had been omitted in deference to your views. He had never intended to insist on an exception being made for Lemnos, but had thought it might have been of value to M. Venizelos to be able to announce at Athens that he had succeeded in dissuading the Triple Alliance from pressing for the restoration of Lemnos to Turkey.

I then reminded His Excellency of the communication I had made some days ago regarding the Prince of Wied's announcement of his acceptance of the throne of Albania, and also regarding the Austro-Italian banking concession.⁽³⁾

The Marquis di San Giuliano said that the Prince was under the impression that he had already conveyed his answer through the German Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.⁽⁴⁾ M. de Jagow had been the channel through which the offer of the Powers had been made, and the Prince appeared to think the reply which he gave to him indicating certain points on which his acceptance would be conditional, would have been communicated by M. de Jagow to the Powers.

(1) [*v. supra*, pp. 76-7, No. 91; and *infra*, p. 190, No. 203, and *note* (1).]

(2) [The explanations reported in Sir R. Rodd's telegram (No. 12) of January 15, 1914, D. 3.30 P.M., R. 7 P.M., referred chiefly to the question of the date at which the Greeks should evacuate Albania. A proposal for the extension of the date would be accepted at once. (F.O. 2104/98/14/44.)]

(3) [The reference is to Sir R. Rodd's communication of January 9, described in his despatch (No. 17), D. January 11, R. January 15, 1914. It was in the sense of Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 429) of December 24, 1913, to Sir E. Goschen, *cp. supra*, pp. 82-3, No. 99. (F.O. 2041/45/14/53.)]

(4) [*cp. supra*, p. 88, *Ed. note.*]

As regarded the banking concession he thought there should be no difficulty in coming to an agreement. The terms of the concession would have to be modified. They seemed to go too far in the direction of a monopoly. At the same time the bank in question had been instituted, and certain expenses had already been contracted. The Austro-Hungarian Government were disposed to uphold some of the privileges acquired for the Bank. Italy could not, owing to her engagements, take a directly opposite view. It was essential that she should remain in line with Austria, but at the same time she would use her influence in a spirit of compromise. He felt that, while a complete internationalisation of Albania was really in Italy's interest, and while she ought as far as possible to guard against the contingency of finding herself hereafter, if differences arose, standing alone in opposition to Austria, it was nevertheless reasonable, in view of their special position in the Adriatic, that Italy and Austria-Hungary should have a somewhat preponderating share of influence, while that of the other Great Powers, whose interests were secondary, should also not be excluded. It was on this basis that he was now working at Vienna. Count Berchtold had been most loyal in all their relations, and he could only approach him in the same spirit. He felt, however, that a compromise should be arrived at, and had every hope that a way would be found of conciliating the two views.

I have, &c.

RENNELL RODD.

No. 106.

Sir M. de Bunsen to Sir A. Nicolson.⁽¹⁾

Private.⁽²⁾

My dear Nicolson,

Vienna, January 16, 1914.

It is really very satisfactory to hear that the Triple Alliance Powers have wheeled into line about the Islands.⁽³⁾ C[oun]t Berchtold prepared me for this a week ago, but it is good news all the same. Difficult questions are coming up, but if the Powers can be kept together, there ought to be a solution found for all of them. It is not easy as yet to see the way out of some of them. Albania is an increasing tangle. How Austria and Italy could ever have believed in the possibility of creating such a State and setting up a working Government there, I have never been able to understand. I was staying lately in a country house in Austrian Silesia, the Larish's, where the German Emperor had paid a visit last September. I heard he had spoken openly there to all he met about Albania, saying the triumph claimed by Austria in getting the State of Albania accepted by the Powers would be shortlived—that Austrian policy in the Adriatic was foolishness—and that the wise thing to have done would have been to let Servia spread to the sea coast and make herself responsible for keeping the Albanians in order. This w[ou]ld have relieved Austria of an impossible task; it w[ou]ld have given reasonable satisfaction to Servian aspirations; and it w[ou]ld have given Servia so much to do at home that she would become a harmless neighbour, with whom it would have been easy to live at peace. He might have added that it w[ou]ld have prevented the second Balkan war.

Who now will govern Albania? The Provisional Government seems to be on its last legs. Here the Ballplatz held on to Ismail Kemal as long as they could, but they have now quite given him up as hopeless. It seems absurd that they should uphold the Austro-Italian State Bank which owes its origin to such a charlatan. Meanwhile I am telling the French Ambassador that I am not yet instructed to join him and the Russian Representative in making an identic representation to this Gov[ernmen]t demanding participation in the Bank in proportion to the share to be

⁽¹⁾ [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Prime Minister. The endorsement is initialled by Sir Edward Grey.]

⁽²⁾ [Carnock MSS., Vol. I of 1914.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. infra*, p. 190, No. 203.]

taken by each Power in the suggested Albanian loan.⁽⁴⁾ I suppose there are difficulties in the way of our sharing in the loan at all. It seems such a hopeless prospect for the Prince of Wied. Here he is being scolded in the Press for not having accepted the throne unconditionally and gone straight to Albania—a bold course which it is supposed would have impressed the tribes and prevented the recent raiding attempt at Vallona.⁽⁵⁾ But I can well understand the poor Prince's hesitation.

C[oun]t Berchtold is very uncommunicative. He is hopelessly vague and undecided. We all like him personally and sh[oul]d be sorry to see him go, but I often wish he would speak out a little. He dined quietly here last night but only said that nothing was as yet decided about sending another ship to the Albanian coast, and that he did not know whether it would be a good thing or not to confide the Government of Albania to the International Commission of Control. Touching for a moment on the general subject of British foreign policy, he said he thought England was more sensitive than any other Power to the slightest displacement of the balance of Power in Europe—and that this was generally the key to her action. He is always extremely friendly.

The attitude of Turkey on the Islands question is an anxiety, with Enver Pasha at the Ministry of War. I have reported officially another conversation with my very delightful but warlike Turkish colleague.⁽⁶⁾ who, I am glad to hear, is *not* going to be removed to St. Petersburg. He is a little too categorical in his statements of what is going to happen in the Balkans as a consequence of the attribution of Chios and Mitylene to Greece. But though I discount much of what he says, I find it difficult to believe in the permanence of the Bucharest settlement. A despatch in the last Print which has reached me, from our V[ice] Consul at Uskub, about the State of Affairs in Southern Servia—the annexed part—is illuminating.⁽⁷⁾ There must be trouble in that region; and might it not suit Servia best to restore part of it to Bulgaria?

Herr v[on] Tschirsky has just been in to see me. He did not seem to know the exact text of the communication made yesterday by the German Chargé d'Aff[aire]s in London, and I read it out to him.⁽⁸⁾ He professed great pleasure at this proof of the general agreement still existing between the Powers. He said a difficult year was before us and no one could foretell what would happen. Much would depend on events in Constantinople. The Servians would never succeed in dominating the Albanian element of the population. The Servian insistence on keeping Prishtina, a place inhabited by 200,000 Albanians, was foolish beyond description. They might in the end control the Bulgarian element, which consisted of Macedonian Bulgarians easily convertible into Serbs, but the Albanians never. Probably marauding bands from Bulgaria would keep up an agitation. Austria no longer had the will, nor Russia the power, to interfere much in the Balkans. Things would have to settle themselves there, now that the Peninsula was occupied entirely by independent states, except the little bit remaining Turkish. The quarrel between Austria and Russia grew rather out of Galician questions—namely the constant intrigues of Russia among the Ruthenes and Poles. But it would not come to war between them. A war between Russia and Turkey was more thinkable, but he did not believe it would come about. He then spoke of the Zabern incidents, and said Germany had heaved a sigh of relief on hearing of the acquittals.⁽⁹⁾ He did not expect an Englishman to understand this,

(4) [*cp. supra*, p. 83, No. 99, note (5); p. 85, No. 100, *min.*]

(5) [*cp. supra*, p. 89, *Ed. note.*]

(6) [*v. infra*, pp. 188-9, No. 202.]

(7) [Mr. Crackanthorpe's despatch (No. 262), D. December 18, R. December 22, 1913, enclosed a report from the British Vice-Consul at Uskub. It described the discontent with the Servian administration in the recently annexed districts, and suggested that even the Serbs in Macedonia might prefer autonomy, while the non-Serbs would certainly do so (F.O. 57490/53104/13/39).]

(8) [*cp. infra*, p. 190, No. 203.]

(9) [Further reference to the Zabern incidents will be made in *Gouch & Temperley*, Vol. X (II). *cp. The Times*, November and December 1913, *passim.*]

some central authority. We should not have very much difficulty with ISMAIL,⁽⁴⁾ but the other is now too strong, as well as too stubborn, to yield to anything but force. The Austrians and Italians have each got a ship ready and are prepared to send it, but they do not want an international landing. The Russian does not want to hear of the Commission going to Durazzo with only Austrian and Italian vessels. My idea would be to occupy Durazzo with marines from the ships of any country that chooses to send them and simultaneously to secure the international principle by moving down a detachment of 500 or 600 men from the garrison of Scutari by land to Tirana, ESSAD's stronghold. This would produce a tremendous effect and, according to our officers, would do the men, who have now been bottled up for eight months within the ten-kilometre zone, an enormous amount of good!

If something is not quickly done, we shall certainly have ESSAD proclaiming himself King of Albania and marching down to take over Korytza from the Greeks. Then Europe must either pocket the insult, allow the partition of Albania or resign itself to an international occupation, which, by that time, might quite possibly meet with resistance in the interior. Serbia and Greece appear to be both backing ESSAD, in spite of his expulsion of the Consul of the former state from Durazzo. In regard to the latter incident, ESSAD as usual played a double game, for while he pleased the Austrians by turning Simitch out, he secretly sent word to the latter that he was really most anxious to maintain close and friendly relations with Serbia and had only acted as he did under irresistible pressure from the common enemy.

The enquiry into the Bekir case progresses slowly. There has been considerable difficulty in constituting a Court. Of those selected to form it some have not had the courage to accept, whilst others have shown a tendency to abuse their position for personal or political objects. The Dutchmen have laid hands upon a further sum of about £1300 belonging to the conspirators but no fresh evidence of any great importance has been obtained.

Believe me, &c.

HARRY IL. LAMB.

P.S. Jan[ua]ry 18th.

The Prince of Wied seems to me to be very badly advised. He appears to draw his ideas about Albania from people like NOGGA, CHRISTO MEKSI, SUREYA Bey and his son EKREM, EKREM the brother of MURID (all "Beys" in pay of Austria), DJEMIL BEY, a discredited "décavé" &c. The last named recently went to Potsdam accompanied by his wife and it is understood that the Princess proposes to make Madame DJEMIL and some other Mussulman lady "Dames d'honneur" at her Court. I suppose they consider this a concession to the Mussulman element, but is there no-one in Berlin with sufficient intelligence to tell them that, though such an appointment may flatter the unbelieving wastrels of Valona or such of them as profit by it, it will be regarded as a deadly insult to their religious feelings by the more real Mohammedans of the Interior?

With regard to your query about the Italian cable from Brindisi to Medua, which I answered—officially—yesterday, I venture to annex copy of a letter⁽⁵⁾ received this morning from the only honest man in Ismail Kemal Bey's "Cabinet." It is worth reading as a light on the way things are conducted in this place.⁽⁶⁾

⁽⁴⁾ [On January 10 Ismail Kemal had offered to hand over his authority to the Commission of Control. (F.O. 2534/14/53/44.) For Essad Pasha's formal resignation, *v. infra*, pp. 96-7, No. 111; p. 99, No. 113.]

⁽⁵⁾ [Not reproduced. It referred chiefly to the Italian cable question, and the unofficial employment of Italian agents in the post and telegraph service.]

⁽⁶⁾ [A record of the information contained in this postscript was sent to Sir E. Goschen in Sir Edward Grey's despatch (No. 22) of January 30. (F.O. 3291/769/14/53.)]

No. 108.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 2981/45/14/53.

Tel. (No. 28.)

Foreign Office, January 20, 1914, 11 P.M.

Albanian Loan.

You should inform M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] that H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] are prepared to recommend Par[liamen]t to agree to G[rea]t Britain participating in a guarantee of a loan of 3 million pounds to Albania provided all the other Powers do likewise, and subject to the consideration that a loan guaranteed by all 6 Powers could not be issued by the Austro-Italian Bank, who have acquired from the provisional Gov[ernmen]t of Ismail Kemal a concession that is still under examination.⁽²⁾

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Berlin (No. 25); to Vienna (No. 16); to Rome (No. 13); to St. Petersburg (No. 28).]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. Imperialismus*, 1st Ser., Vol I, pp. 74-5, No. 87; p. 79, No. 93; p. 83, No. 97.]

No. 109.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 3222/769/14/53

(No 32.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 20, 1914.

M. Cambon informed me to-day that M. Doumergue would contemplate sending a French warship to the Albanian coast if other Powers sent warships, even if Germany adhered to her intention to abstain from sending a ship.⁽²⁾ German abstention, M. Doumergue considered, would be due to a desire to facilitate a free hand for Austria and Italy. Under no circumstances, however, would the French land a force.

I said that it had been our view that we would send a ship, if all the other Powers did so, but I should not make the abstention of Germany alone a reason for not sending a ship. We also were not prepared to land a force. Should it be found necessary to remove Essad or his partisans from Durazzo, I supposed that it would be done by forces landed by Austria and Italy only.

M. Cambon said that, in his personal opinion, if ships were sent and a force was landed by one Power, all the Powers would have to land forces.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Prime Minister.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 89, *Ed. note*; *infra*, p. 96, No. 111, *note* ⁽²⁾.]

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Elliot.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 3807/98/14/44.

(No. 7.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 21, 1914.

M. Venizelos came to see me this morning.⁽²⁾

He said that he had discussed in Rome a certain exchange as regards details of the frontier of Southern Albania. He proposed, when the Powers communicated their decision about the frontier, to make it quite clear that he would accept this decision as it stood, but also to suggest the alteration that he had discussed in Rome.

I said that, having been the President of the meetings of Ambassadors, I could not propose any alteration of the decisions come to by the meetings; but I would not object to any alteration of the frontier of the south of Albania to which M. Venizelos could secure the assent of Austria and Italy.

M. Venizelos said that he would like to have the communication of the Powers about the southern frontier and the Ægean Islands as soon as possible; and in accepting it he would like to state, not as a condition of Greek acceptance, but as a request to the Powers, that liberty of religion and schools should be granted to the Christian element in Epirus.

M. Venizelos said that he hoped it would be agreed that the Greek evacuation should be gradual.

I said that the Italians had complained bitterly of the proceedings of the Greek authorities. For instance, during the last day or two the Italian Ambassador had complained to me of the severe measures of disarmament taken against Mussulmans at Delvino. It was most important that the Greek authorities should avoid all acts of provocation which aroused Italian susceptibilities.

M. Venizelos then went on to discuss the question of a guarantee by the Powers of the Greek possession of the Ægean Islands. If the islands were to be neutralised, Greece would be placed at some disadvantage in defending them: she could not fortify them or make preparations in advance for their defence. If, therefore, the Powers imposed the condition of neutralisation, it would be only fair that they should guarantee to Greece their peaceful possession. He had spoken of this to M. Tittoni, the Italian Ambassador in Paris. The latter had said that he thought his Government would consider this reasonable, and he had suggested that I might propose it.

I told M. Venizelos that I could not make this proposal. It would be for Greece to raise the question of a guarantee in her reply to the communication of the Powers. I would raise no objection on my part to her doing this, but I thought that it would be well for M. Venizelos to feel the ground in Berlin. If Greece asked for a guarantee, and the Powers did not agree to give it, the fact would be emphasised that no guarantee existed. If, however, he found that the German Government saw no objection to a guarantee, then I thought it probable that the Powers would agree to it, and Greece might ask for it in her reply to the communication that she would receive from all the Powers. I pointed out that, if there was to be a guarantee, it would have to be one by all the Powers. If France and we alone were to give a guarantee, or if some of the Powers gave a guarantee, while other Powers abstained, there would be a division of the Powers into two parties, one for Turkey and one for Greece, and things would be thrown into confusion.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

⁽²⁾ [Count Benckendorff sent a telegram to M. Sazonov on January 21 giving an account of this conversation as described to him by Sir Edward Grey. *v. Imperialismus*, 1st Ser., Vol. I, pp. 58-9, No. 64. A private letter on the subject is printed *infra*, pp. 194-5, No. 207. M. Venizelos visited Paris, Rome, Berlin, St. Petersburg, Vienna and London during January 1914. He arrived in London on January 20 (*v. The Times*, January 21, 1914) and left on January 23 (*v. ibid.*, January 24). *cp. O.U.A.*, VII, p. 723, No. 9176. On January 4 M. Streit took the place of Dr. Panas as Minister for Foreign Affairs. (F.O. 1946/98/14/53.)]

Consul-General Lamb to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 4454/769/14/53.

(No. 20.)

Sir,

Valona, D. January 22, 1914.

R. January 31, 1914.

The events and correspondence of the last fortnight have left no doubt in the mind of anyone, who hesitated to believe it before, that the disquieting situation now existing in the district of Elbassan and elsewhere in Albania is mainly, if not entirely, due to the ambitions and machinations of Essad Pasha, who has long been scheming with a view to extend his influence over the whole of the country and, in particular, in the direction of the Greek frontier, in order that he himself may be in a position to assume command of the occupation of the Southern provinces on their evacuation by the Greeks. There seems good occasion to believe that a secret understanding exists between him and the Greek Government on this subject.

Under these circumstances, as I had the honour of informing you in my telegram No. 16 of the 18th inst[ant],⁽¹⁾ the members of the International Commission are unanimously of the opinion that the removal of Essad Pasha from Durazzo and the destruction of the prestige which he has acquired in the eyes of the ignorant population are absolutely essential if the programme established at the London Conference of Ambassadors is to have a chance of being carried out.

Being, however, unable to agree on any course of action and being moreover uncertain to what extent it might rely upon material assistance from the Powers, the Commission has been compelled to temporise, and accordingly despatched the Albanian Delegate Mufid Bey to Durazzo in order to sound Essad on the possibility of his falling in with the plan suggested by Ismail Kemal and outlined in my telegram No. 11 of the 11th inst[ant],⁽²⁾ viz.: that both of them should resign their power into the hands of the Commission of Control, which should endeavour to carry on the administration of the country until the arrival of the Prince.

From a telegram which I received last night from Mufid Bey at Durazzo I understand that Essad Pasha has also consented to retire upon certain conditions which are at present unknown to us but which our Albanian colleague, who is fully acquainted with our views on the subject, himself considers capable of acceptance.

This afternoon therefore the Commission called *in corpore* on Ismail Kemal Bey, and informed him that it was authorised by the Powers to accept his resignation and assume the administration. A *Procès-verbal* (copy of which is annexed hereto) was immediately drawn up and signed, after which the decision was announced to the members of Ismail Kemal's "Cabinet," which was *ipso facto* regarded as dissolved. The Commission appointed Feizi Bey Alizot, who for the past two months has acted as Minister of the Interior and who appears to be a competent administrator, Director-General of Internal Affairs, and telegraphed the appointment to the Mutessarifs of Berat and Elbassan, whom it directed to correspond through him. The other Ministers were requested to continue to administer the affairs of their respective Departments, under the direction of the Commission, until fresh dispositions can be taken.

Ismail Kemal Bey will probably leave in the course of the next few days for Europe.

I have, &c.

HARRY H. LAMB.

(1) [Consul-General Lamb's telegram (No. 16) of January 18, 1914, D. 7 P.M., R. 10 P.M., is not reproduced as the contents are sufficiently indicated above. (F.O. 2411/769/14/53.)]

(2) [Consul-General Lamb's telegram (No. 11) of January 12, 1914, D. 12-30 A.M., R. 11-30 A.M., expressed doubt of the solution proposed unless accompanied by a display of force, and asked for men-of-war to be sent to Durazzo to land forces if necessary. Sir Edward Grey minuted this telegram to the effect that "we will send a ship if all other Powers do so, but if it is a case of sending a land force to take active operations, we cannot undertake to participate, but cannot object to other Powers doing what is necessary to maintain the European decision about Albania." (F.O. 1446/769/14/53.)]

Enclosure in No. 111.

Procès-verbal.

Aujourd'hui, le 22 Janvier, 1914, la Commission Internationale de Contrôle s'est rendue auprès de son Excellence Ismaïl Kemal Bey. Le Président du Gouvernement Provisoire, persuadé que le seul moyen de mettre fin à l'état de scission et d'anarchie dans le pays était de former un Gouvernement unique pour toute l'Albanie et que, dans les circonstances actuelles, ce but ne pourrait être atteint que s'il remettait le pouvoir entre les mains de la Commission Internationale de Contrôle, représentant les Grandes Puissances, réitère la prière qu'il avait précédemment et en présence de ses Ministres adressée à la Commission Internationale de Contrôle, d'assumer cette tâche et d'accepter la remise des pouvoirs entre ses mains. La Commission Internationale de Contrôle rend hommage aux sentiments patriotiques qui ont fait agir son Excellence Ismaïl Kemal Bey, elle accepte cette remise de pouvoirs, et, dûment autorisée par les Grandes Puissances, elle assume, au nom des Gouvernements qu'elle représente, l'administration de l'Albanie.

ISMAÏL KEMAL.
NADOLNY.
PETROVIC.
LEON KRAJEWSKI.
HARRY H. LAMB.
LEONI.
PETRIAEF.

Valona, le 22 janvier, 1914.

.....
No. 112.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir M. de Bunsen.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 6568/45/14/53.

(No. 18.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 10, 1914.

Count Mensdorff informed me to-day that the Austrian Government were sending the reply of which a copy is enclosed herein, to the French Government⁽²⁾ about the Albanian Bank.

Count Berchtold hoped that I would be able to accept the view contained in this reply.

I said that I did not wish to precipitate an unfavourable answer, and I would wait to hear what the French Government had to say; but I did not think that it would be fair to withhold from Count Mensdorff the fact that our view had been that there should be equal participation. If the French Government adhered to this view, we could not depart from it. Count Mensdorff instanced the precedents of the Morocco Bank and the Commission of the Debt in Constantinople as cases in which the Powers with special interests had special positions. On this I said that the special positions of France and Spain in Morocco had been recognised by Agreements that preceded the establishment of the Morocco Bank. The Commission of the Debt in Constantinople had originally been arranged as it was, because at the time the greater part of the Debt was held by France and England. But internationalisation

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

⁽²⁾ [Sir F. Bertie's despatch (No. 48), D. January 25, R. January 26, 1914, forwarded the text of a memorandum of January 24 communicated to him by M. Doumergue in reply to his action in accordance with Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 28) of January 20 (*v. supra*, p. 94, No. 108). It gave the conditions on which the French Government were prepared to participate in the loan. (F.O. 3624/45/14/53.) The terms of the conditions were also communicated by M. Paul Cambon on January 25, 1914. (F.O. 3673/45/14/53.) *cp.* M. Jules Cambon's communication to Herr von Jagow on January 24, *G.P.*, XXXVI (II), pp. 598-9.]

was the foundation on which the Albanian State was built: there was no privileged position on the Commission of Control, and to recognise a privileged position in connexion with the State Bank would be a new departure.

Count Mensdorff urged that the State Bank was an economic affair. The concession had been obtained by the Austrian and Italian Banks, and it was natural that they should have a privileged position.

I observed that the concession had been obtained from Ismaïl Kemal, whose Government had been very partial and provisional: so much so that the obtaining of a concession for a permanent monopoly of this sort from such a Government was rather stealing a march upon other Powers.

Count Mensdorff said that it was necessary to make some progress, and that, unless the Austrian and Italian Banks had acted, we should not now be able to discuss financial questions at all.

In reply to a remark of mine that I doubted whether the State Bank had been essential for Albania when the concession was granted, he assured me that the Bank had been very useful.

I pointed out to Count Mensdorff, in answer to further pressure from him to accept the Austrian point of view about the internationalisation of the Bank, that I should have difficulty in getting Parliament to agree to take an equal share of international liability with regard to the Loan for Albania while having only an unequal share in the Bank.

Count Mensdorff suggested that perhaps this might be met by the taking of a larger share of financial liability by Austria and Italy, but we did not pursue this suggestion.

[I am, &c.]
E. G[REY].

Enclosure in No. 112.

The point of view of the Austro-Hungarian Government is that, as during the Conferences on the subject of the Albanian Statute the Ambassadors' Réunion in London arrived at no decision concerning a future state bank, the financial institutes of every country are at liberty to apply for the concession.

Taking their eminently important economic interests into consideration, Austria-Hungary and Italy have supported the steps taken by their banks in this respect at the Albanian Provisional Government and are of opinion that the concession granted them by the Provisional Government is quite free of objection (*einwandfrei*) and legal.

Nevertheless to meet as far as possible the desire pronounced by France and the other Entente Powers and to enable the Powers to work together in the interest of the new Albanian State created by the will of Europe, the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and Italy are ready to enter into a compromise between their aforesaid own—and the French point of view, which desires to internationalize the Bank with an equal participation of all the Powers.

The Austro-Hungarian Government consents, therefore, to the principle of internationalization, on the condition that a special position should be secured for Austria-Hungary and Italy in the State Bank on account of their eminently superior interests in Albania created by their geographical position. (1) That a larger participation in the Capital should be granted to the Austro-Hungarian and Italian concerns, i.e. 30% to each of them and 10% to each of the other 4 Powers; (2) Representation on the board equivalent to the above mentioned participation and the alternative chairmanship; (3) The sole direction of all the banking transactions and of the personnel.

Concerning the French proposal on the subject of the sphere of action of the International Commission of Control the Austro-Hungarian Government is of opinion that this has been settled by the Ambassadors' Conference. Through the momentary

exceptional situation in Albania this sphere has been temporarily enlarged, but it does not appear admissible that this extension should assume a permanent character. The installation of the Prince brings it to its natural end. The Austro-Hungarian Government had also only given their consent to this provisional extension on the condition that it should be temporary.

London, February 10, 1914.

No. 113.

Consul-General Lamb to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 7402/146/14/53.

(No. 36.)

Sir,

Durazzo, D. February 12, 1914.

R. February 18, 1914.

With reference to my despatch No. 27 of the 5th inst[ant],⁽¹⁾ I have the honour to report that Essad Pasha left here this morning on board an Italian steamer for Bari, together with twelve members of the deputation selected to offer, on behalf of the nation, the throne of Albania to the Prince of Wied. Four other members of the deputation are already in Europe.

From Bari it was the Pasha's intention to proceed to Rome and thence to Neuwied, where it has been arranged that the deputation is to be received by the Prince on the 19th.⁽²⁾

Before leaving Essad Pasha formally tendered his resignation to the International Commission, which however was compelled to pass the sponge over the numerous abuses of his past administration, including his lavish expenditure of public moneys in the advancement of his personal ambitions amongst which must be mentioned a sum of above £T. 11000 (eleven thousand pounds Turkish) distributed among the mountaineers of Scutari, whom he had during the past month invited to come and do homage to him at Durazzo.

The Pasha's decision to travel by way of Italy rather than by Trieste, his choice of an Italian steamer and above all the totally unnecessary detour to visit Rome are all regarded here as so many pin-pricks administered to Austria, with whom he is at present on the worst of terms.

There seems to be little doubt that the Austrian Government, which had dropped its former protégé, Ismail Kemal Bey, as soon as he ceased to be a docile agent and, by coquetting with Essad Pasha, had largely contributed to the rapid growth of the latter's power, some time ago became alarmed at the very rapidity of that growth. Its alarm and annoyance were increased by the refusal of Essad to allow the opening of an Austrian school in his native town of Tirana and rendered more acute by his intrigues with the Catholic mountaineers in the North. The Italians, following the same policy as their rivals but apparently served by more discerning agents, took advantage of these facts to establish their own influence over Essad and to win him over to their side.

I have reason to believe that the resistance which we encountered from the Pasha after his first agreement with my German Colleague and myself on Jan[uary] 30th⁽³⁾ and his subsequent apparent surrender on the intervention of the Italian Consul was merely part of a comedy arranged between the latter and himself, who were all the

⁽¹⁾ [Consul-General Lamb's despatch (No. 27), D. February 5, R. February 9, 1914, reported that discussions had taken place between the Commission of Control and Essad Pasha. (F.O. 6001/769/14/53)]

⁽²⁾ [A minute by Mr. C. Russell stated that the Prince had "changed his plans" since the despatch was written.]

⁽³⁾ [The text of this agreement was enclosed in Consul-General Lamb's despatch (No. 25), D January 31, R. February 7, 1914. *cp. G.P., XXXVI (I), pp. 351-2; pp. 355-8.*]

time playing into their own hands. I am assured that Essad counts upon the support of the Consulta in his endeavour to execute his pet project of inducing his future Prince to select him as Minister of War.

Such an appointment would in my opinion be fatal to the Prince's chance of success and perhaps also to that of Albanian independence but it will obviously be difficult for the Prince to avoid employing him and as long as he is in the country he will be a constant source of anxiety and unrest. It is particularly desirable that he should not be allowed to return to Albania before the Prince's arrival.

I have, &c.
(For Mr. Lamb),
M. G. HARRIS.

No. 114.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 7748/45/14/53.

(No. 40.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 18, 1914.

The Prince of Wied came to see me to-day.⁽²⁾

I said that I was sure that, on the part of all the Powers, there was the greatest goodwill to him personally.

In the course of conversation, I took an opportunity of telling him that we had informed the Austria [*sic*: Austro-Hungarian] and Italian Governments that, in our opinion, the advance made by them, which was to be repaid out of a Loan guaranteed by all the Powers, should be expended by arrangement with the International Commission of Control.

I also said that there were two main points at present being discussed between the Powers.

One of these was equal participation in the National Bank of Albania. I explained how, when I went to Parliament to get its consent to our joining the guarantee of the Loan for Albania, I should be asked what British interest was involved which justified the assumption by the British Government of this financial liability. I should reply that it was an international obligation, because we were one of the founders of the State of Albania. But, if we were not to have equal participation in the Albanian Bank, Parliament would ask why we should assume equal participation in the financial liability.

The second point was that the expenditure of all advances made to Albania, such as the existing one from Austria and Italy, should be controlled by the International Commission.

I went on to say that, in order that the discussion of these troublesome financial questions should be as little disagreeable as possible to the Prince of Wied, the discussion was being carried on between the Governments.

The Prince of Wied expressed great satisfaction and pleasure at the way in which he had been received by the King to-day.

He told me that he was going to Paris at once, and regretted that the length of time it would take to go to St. Petersburg and back made it impossible for him to go there at the present moment, as he was to receive the Albanian Deputation soon.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

⁽²⁾ [The Prince of Wied visited London on February 18, leaving the same night. He was received by the King and Queen, and had an interview with Prince Lichnowsky as well as with Sir Edward Grey. *cp. The Times*, February 19. Within a fortnight he visited also Rome, Vienna, Berlin, Paris, and a little later St. Petersburg. *cp. O.U.A.*, VII, p. 896, No. 9397, *sqq.*, *G.P.*, XXXVI (II), pp. 602-13.]

I said that, though there were many difficulties in connection with Albania, everything that we heard from unofficial Englishmen who travelled there was in favour of the people. Under the Turkish rule, the people had had no chance to develop their country, but I hoped that an independent State and the qualities of the people would enable it to be developed now. In any case, I understood that the people were attractive, and the country picturesque.

[I am, &c.]
E. G[REY].

No. 115.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 7750/45/14/53.

(No. 90.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 19, 1914.

M. Cambon and Count Benckendorff came together to see me this morning.⁽²⁾

M. Cambon said that he assumed that we all adhered to the view that there must be equal participation in the National Bank of Albania, and also that the expenditure of advances made to Albania should be controlled by the International Commission. After the arrival in Albania of the Prince of Wied, the Commission would retain the powers that it had originally, but it would give up the executive power that it had assumed since the resignation of Ismail Kemal and Essad.⁽³⁾

I agreed to these propositions, saying that I thought the proper course would be for the Prince of Wied to consult with the International Commission as to the formation of an "Autorité Indigène," which would be the executive, the Commission of Control retaining the powers that had been assigned to it at the reunions in London. Without referring to the text of the resolution, I could not say exactly what these powers were.

Finally, I observed to M. Cambon that, as he was going to Paris for a few days, it might be well for him to discuss there with M. Doumergue what we were to do if Italy and Austria refused to agree to equal participation in the Bank of Albania and control of expenditure by the International Commission and continued to advance money to Albania, perhaps making themselves the whole Loan required by Albania. We need not discuss this to-day, but if the situation arose we should have to consider whether we should withdraw from Albania, or what our attitude should be.

M. Cambon and Count Benckendorff agreed that this was a question to be considered.

M. Cambon observed that there would be one lever to influence Italy: because Italy was very anxious not to be left alone with Austria in the Albanian question.

[I am, &c.]
E. G[REY].

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet. It was repeated to St. Petersburg (No. 68).]

⁽²⁾ [*op. Imperialismus*, 1st Ser., Vol. I, p. 275, No. 290.]

⁽³⁾ [*v supra*, pp. 96-7, No. 111, and *encl.*; pp. 99-100, No. 113.]

No. 116.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 7937/146/14/53.

(No. 41.)

Foreign Office, February 19, 1914.

Sir,

I told the German Ambassador to-day the substance of my conversation with the Prince of Wied yesterday.⁽²⁾

I said that he had made a most favourable impression, and appeared to be one of the most amiable of men. As far as I could gather, he had made this impression on everyone. I thought that it was an excellent thing that he had come here, and also that he was visiting Paris.

The Prince had expressed himself with the greatest pleasure and satisfaction respecting his reception by the King.

[I am, &c.]
E. G[REY].

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 100-I, No. 114, and *note* ⁽²⁾.]

No. 117.

Mr. Grahame to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 7826/146/14/53.

(No. 107.)

*Paris, D. February 20, 1914.**R. February 21, 1914.*

Sir:—

I have the honour to inform you that the Prince of Wied arrived in Paris yesterday morning and left again in the evening. The President of the Republic gave a small luncheon party in the Prince's honour, at which the President of the Council, M. de Margerie, Political Director of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and some members of the Institute were present.

The Prince also paid a visit to M. Doumergue at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

M. de Margerie tells me that the Prince personally made a good impression both on the President of the Republic and on M. Doumergue, as he had none of the disagreeable characteristics commonly associated with the idea of a Prussian officer.

M. Doumergue told the Prince of Wied that, while France had no direct political interest in Albania, the French Government regarded his mission in Albania in the most sympathetic manner as being calculated to give effect to the decision come to by the Powers at the Réunions of Ambassadors in London. He advised the Prince to avail himself of the presence of the International Commission in Albania and to lean on that body while feeling his way there.

M. Doumergue followed up this piece of advice by observing that the Prince would do well to let the International Commission have the responsibility as regards the expenditure of the Austro-Italian advance made to him, for if that advance was eventually to be reimbursed from an international loan to Albania, it would be convenient if he were able to show that the International Commission had approved of the manner in which the money had been spent.

I have, &c.

GEORGE GRAHAME.

No. 118.

Sir F. Elliot to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 8873/352/14/53.

(No. 47.)

Sir,

Athens, D. February 22, 1914.

R. February 28, 1914.

I had some conversation last night with Monsieur Venizelos at a party. His Excellency expressed the hope that the Powers would admit the reasonableness of the Greek reply to the collective Note.⁽²⁾ He laid stress on the difficulty he would have in inducing the Epirotes not to give trouble, but he hoped to succeed, if the transfer was effected slowly and gradually. The Greek troops would only hand over to regularly constituted Albanian forces; if irregular bands appeared the Greek troops would stand fast; it was the only way of avoiding terrible bloodshed. He would say frankly that if he had had the slightest hope that the populations could maintain themselves unassisted against the Albanians he would have allowed them to try it: all he was required by the Powers to do was to evacuate and not to encourage resistance directly or indirectly. But he was convinced it was hopeless, and he was therefore taking the course which he believed to be best for the populations themselves, as well as for the future relations of Greece and Albania.

In a previous conversation Monsieur Venizelos expressed the opinion that the Albanian Government would be well advised not to attempt to reduce Spiromilios and the people of Khimara for some time to come, but to leave them to the influence of time and the example of other districts.

Monsieur Venizelos said he was sending Monsieur Varatassi, the Prefect of Corfu, to Valona to put himself in communication with the International Commission and concert with them details respecting the evacuation and other points. Monsieur Varatassi, during several years' office at Corfu, had always got on well with the Albanians, and was a man of good sense.

His Excellency presumed that Essad Pasha would be the Prince of Wied's first Prime Minister. He was friendly disposed towards the Greeks—I remarked that they were believed to subsidise him, to which Monsieur Venizelos replied “No, we had enough of that with Ismaïl Kemal”—and it was to be hoped that he would take into his Cabinet a Greek from the incorporated districts of Epirus. Nothing would do more to reassure the populations. I asked if there were any men among them qualified for office. Monsieur Venizelos instanced a Dr. Tourtoulis (if I caught the name rightly) who has been acting as Essad Pasha's secretary. He is an Albanian of Greek sympathies, who has lived and served in Greece, but who now that an independent Albania is to be set up proposes to devote himself to her service, for which he is branded as a traitor here, but not by Monsieur Venizelos, who on the contrary considers he is entirely right.

I have, &c.

F. ELLIOT.

(1) [This despatch was sent to Valona with further information about Dr. Tourtoulis from Consul-General Lamb and Lord Kitchener. (cp. F.O. 56536/13799/13/44. F.O. 5570/5570/14/53.) cp. *infra*, p. 111, *Ed. note.*]

(2) [The collective note was addressed to M. Streit on February 13, cp. *infra*, pp. 231-2, No. 252, and *encl.* The Greek reply of February 21 is given *infra*, pp. 235-7, No. 255, and *encl.*]

No. 119.

Consul-General Lamb to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 9667/352/14/53.

(No. 47.)

Sir,

Valona, D. February 28, 1914.

R. March 4, 1914.

For several days past rumours have been current in this place to the effect that the oft threatened proclamation of autonomy in Epirus had taken place. On the

(1) [This despatch was sent to Athens.]

26th instant, as I had the honour of informing you in my telegram No. 40 of that date,⁽²⁾ printed placards were discovered here containing an announcement to that effect, over the signature of the notorious band-leader SPIRO-MILIO of KIHMARRA. I hope to be in a position to forward you a translation of this document shortly.⁽³⁾

This morning the President of the International Commission received from Corfu a telegram "en clair," signed G. Chr[isto] ZOGRAPHOS, announcing that he had been appointed "President of the Provisional Government of Epirus" in virtue of a resolution adopted at a meeting of the representatives of all the occupied provinces held at ARGYROCASTRO on the 17th instant and warning us that the Epirotes would "regard as an act of hostility" and resist by force of arms any attempt on the part of the Albanian Gendarmerie to "violate their territory." A copy of this telegram is annexed hereto.⁽³⁾

It is perfectly obvious that these measures could not have been adopted without the knowledge and connivance of the Greek authorities in occupation of ARGYROCASTRO as well as of those in CORFOU. It is indeed within my personal knowledge that M. ZOGRAPHOS has been for some time past a frequent visitor at CORFOU, where he was in close contact with the Prefect VARATASSI, whom the Greek Government recently designated as Commissaire for the purpose of coming to an understanding with the International Commission in regard to the method of evacuation. It is therefore difficult to imagine that the latter was a stranger to the designs and intentions of the agitators.

I venture to think that these events give a particular significance to the remarks of M. VENIZELOS quoted by Sir Francis Elliot in his despatch No. 47 of the 22nd instant,⁽⁴⁾ of which His Excellency was kind enough to forward me a copy. The Greek Government would appear at last to have come to the conclusion that the force which they have organised in the occupied provinces can be trusted to "maintain itself unassisted against the Albanians" and is going to "allow them to try," but it required a remarkable degree of effrontery to permit the leaders of this force to communicate their intentions to the representatives of the guaranteeing Powers in Albania, whilst the country is still officially administered by Greece.

I have, &c.

HARRY H. LAMB.

(2) [Consul-General Lamb's telegram (No. 40), D. February 26, 7.50 p.m., R. February 27, 1914, 8 a.m., is not reproduced as the contents are sufficiently indicated above. (F.O. 8704/352/14/53.)]

* "I have now obtained a translation of this document, copy of which is annexed hereto as Inclosure No. 2." [The enclosures are not reproduced.]

(3) [Not reproduced as the contents are sufficiently indicated above.]

(4) [v. immediately preceding document.]

No. 120.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Elliot.

F.O. 9959/98/14/44.

(No. 21.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 2, 1914.

The Greek Minister read to me to-day two telegrams from the Greek Minister for Foreign Affairs, of which I transmit copies herewith.⁽¹⁾

He said that he was sure that I would realise that M. Venizelos was in a most difficult position, but that he acted with perfect good faith.

I said that I had every confidence in M. Venizelos.

The Minister then impressed upon me that, if M. Venizelos were only in a position to assure the people of Epirus that they would have liberty as regards their Churches,

(1) [These enclosures are not reproduced as their contents are sufficiently indicated above.]

schools, and communal arrangements, and that some of the native inhabitants would be embodied in the gendarmerie force in their district, so that the force would not be entirely composed of Albanians who were distinct from them, then M. Venizelos would be able to use some influence in calming the movement in Epirus.

I said that, in other words, what M. Venizelos desired was a speedy reply to that part of his answer to the Powers which asked for these liberties for Epirus.⁽²⁾

The Greek Minister confirmed this, and said that the Italian Minister in Athens had already, as it seemed with unnecessary haste, argued that these liberties would be inconsistent with the internal organisation of Albania.

I said that this did not apply, at any rate, to the embodiment of native inhabitants in the gendarmerie. I would bear in mind what the Greek Minister had told me when we received a communication, as I supposed we should, from Austria and Italy about the trouble in Epirus.⁽³⁾

The Minister was anxious that I should make some proposal to the Powers.

I said that we really could not always take the initiative in everything connected with Albania. I would wait for a communication from Austria and Italy about the rising in Epirus before I made any proposal.

[I am, &c.]
E. G[REY].

(2) [*v. infra*, p. 237, No. 255, *encl.*]

(3) [*cp. infra*, pp. 112-4, Nos 126-7.]

No. 121.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 10161/45/14/53.

(No. 125.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 4, 1914.

The French and Russian Ambassadors came to see me to-day, and in the course of conversation Count Benckendorff gave me the two Memoranda, of which copies are enclosed herein.

M. Cambon read to us the answer that M. Doumergue had given to the Austrian and Italian proposal of a 60 per cent participation for themselves, and other privileged conditions, in the Albanian National Bank. M. Doumergue had declined to accept these conditions, but had said that, outside these conditions, he was willing to examine what means could be found of satisfying Austrian and Italian interests as regards the Bank. M. Cambon said that he had no idea what means could be found.

We then discussed the presidency of the Bank.

They thought that Austria and Italy would object to each of the Powers having the Presidency in turn for a year, but that the presidency of an Englishman might be accepted.

I said that I doubted whether it would be accepted, and we did not desire it. I could not propose it; but of course, if the five Powers asked us if we could find some one of financial experience who would take the presidency of the Bank, we would try to do so.

I added that I agreed with M. Doumergue's reply to Austria and Italy, and had no objection to raise to his proposal to find some means of satisfying Austrian and Italian interests, but I should like to know what he had in his mind.

[I am, &c.]
E. G[REY].

(1) [This despatch was repeated to St. Petersburg (No. 77). Count Benckendorff's account of the conversation recorded here is given in *Imperialism*, 1st Ser., Vol. I, pp. 373-4, No. 377. For the communication from M. Sazonov which forms the first enclosure *cp. ibid.*, pp. 269-71, No. 285.]

British Documents on the Origins of the War 1898-1914. by, Gooch, G.F. & Temperley, H.C. eds. 1929.

Enclosure in No. 121.

Memoranda communicated by Count Benckendorff.

(1)

Londres, le 26 Février, 1914.

Mr. Sazonow me communique en date du 19 Février e[ouran]t ce qui suit :

L'Ambassade d'Angleterre par une notice, en date du 27 Janvier nous demande notre opinion sur certaines questions relatives à l'emprunt [*sic* : emprunt] albanais, en ajoutant que Sir Edward Grey trouve désirable d'établir un accord défini sur ces questions entre la Grande-Bretagne, la France et la Russie.⁽²⁾

Le point de vue du Gouvernement Impérial concernant les questions soulevées dans cette notice se résume comme suit :

Nous sommes d'accord avec l'opinion du Gouvernement Français sur le montant de l'emprunt albanais qui pourrait être diminué. Nous partageons l'opinion de Mr. Petriaeff, notre Commissaire en Albanie, que l'émission d'un emprunt total de 30 millions, serait préférable à l'émission d'un emprunt plus considérable échelonné débutant par une émission partielle de 20 millions.

N'attribuant pas d'importance principale à ce côté de la question, nous serions prêts à une solution plus conforme aux vœux des Cabinets de Londres et de Paris.

Il en est de même pour les conditions purement de banque de l'emprunt, qui d'ailleurs ne sauraient être étudiées qu'après décision prise sur le principe de l'emprunt.

D'accord en ceci avec la Grande-Bretagne et la France, nous estimons que l'emploi des revenus fournis par l'emprunt devra être effectué sous le contrôle de la Commission Internationale.

L'affectation spéciale des sommes pourrait être établie par les Représentants des Puissances à la Commission Internationale.

Par sa notice, l'Ambassade d'Autriche-Hongrie nous informe que le Cabinet de Vienne ne verrait pas d'objections à ce point.

Pour ce qui concerne l'internationalisation de la banque albanaise, nous estimons, que d'après les résolutions de la réunion des Ambassadeurs à Londres, le contrôle des finances albanaises devrait être exercé par toutes les Puissances également, ce principe établi serait contredit par une internationalisation, accordant une situation prépondérante à deux Puissances seulement, comme serait le cas, si l'institution de la banque était basée sur la concession austro-italienne, qui dispose de toutes les sources économiques et financières de l'Albanie.

Le Gouvernement Français, ayant par le promemoria du 22 Janvier, émis une opinion précise, nous serions prêts à y adhérer, si le Gouvernement Britannique de son côté s'associait au point de vue que la question de l'emprunt ne peut être décidée qu'après solution satisfaisante de celle de la banque.⁽³⁾

Si le Cabinet de Paris modifiait son opinion à ce sujet, nous sommes prêts à prendre en considération toute nouvelle proposition qu'il aurait à formuler.—Pourtant dans notre opinion, il est en tout cas, nécessaire que l'emprunt se conclue soit à la condition du contrôle de la Commission Internationale, soit à celle de l'internationalisation à parts égales de la banque albanaise.

(2) [The reference is to Sir G. Buchanan's communication of January 27/February 9, reported in his telegram (No. 43) of that date, D. 9-30 p.m., R. 10-30 p.m. (F.O. 6018/45/14/53.) He had been instructed on February 7 to make enquiries as to the Russian views on the amount of the loan and the interdependence of the loan and bank questions, and Sir Edward Grey added that he "would suggest that the French, Russian and British Gov[ernmen]ts sh[oul]d arrive at a clear understanding" (Telegram (No. 70) of February 7, 1914, D. 7 p.m. F.O. 5068/45/14/53.)]

(3) [*cp. Imperialismus*, 1st Ser., Vol I, p. 270, No. 285, note (3). *cp.* also Sir F. Bertie's despatch (No. 40), D. January 22, R. January 23, which enclosed a note communicated to him by M. Doumergue on January 21, 1914. It contained a statement of the principle that participation in the loan should depend upon the internationalisation of the Bank and the acceptance of the views previously expressed as to the powers of the Commission of Control in financial questions. (F.O. 3167/146/14/53.) *cp.* also *supra*, p. 97, No. 112, note (2).]

Mr. Sazonow ajoute que la question concernant l'emprunt albanais est du nombre de celles, dont les particularités devraient être débattues à Londres, afin d'établir de cette façon un point de vue commun en cette matière entre les Cabinets de Londres de Paris et de S[ain]t-Petersbourg.

(2)

Mr. Sazonow télégraphie en date du 1—er Mars c[ouran]t :

Le Prince Koudacheff télégraphie de Vienne que le Gouvernement Austro-Hongrois accède volontiers à la demande que la dépense des fonds de l'avance soit contrôlée par la Commission Internationale de contrôle, si toutefois les autres Puissances déclarent dès à présent leur consentement à ce que l'avance de dix millions au Prince de Wied soit imputée à l'emprunt à contracter par l'Albanie sous la garantie des Puissances. Quant à l'emploi de la susdite somme de dix millions de francs : selon les dispositions du contrat à conclure entre le Prince de Wied et les banques prêteuses à ce sujet, le produit de l'avance envisagée doit servir au but suivant : 5 millions pour travaux d'utilité publique, 3 millions pour les frais de la gendarmerie, le reste de 2 millions est à la libre disposition du Prince pour lui offrir les moyens de consolider son Gouvernement. Par conséquent, l'emploi de cette dernière somme devrait naturellement être exempté du contrôle de la Commission Internationale, laquelle, par contre, exercerait relativement à la somme de 8 millions pleinement les fonctions de surveillance qui lui seront attribuées. Quant à la garantie de ladite avance, il est prévu qu'elle est à valoir sur le premier emprunt qui sera contracté par l'Albanie. Subsidiairement sont affectés au remboursement de l'avance les droits de douane de l'Albanie.

[*ED. NOTE.*—On March 7 Consul-General Lamb informed Sir Edward Grey (in his despatch No. 51, D. March 7, R. March 17, 1914) that the Prince and Princess of Wied had arrived at Durazzo that day in an Austrian ship, the "Taurus," escorted by H.M.S. "Gloucester," the French cruiser "Bruix" and the Italian cruiser "Quarto." They were received by Essad Pasha, Feizi Bey and Aziz Pasha, Directors-General of Affairs at Valona and Durazzo. The Mayor of the town also went on board the "Taurus." On landing they were met by General de Weer and his adjutant of the Consular Corps, and the heads of the various religious communities. The International Commission of Control met them with an official speech of welcome directly afterwards. Consul-General Lamb stated that two or three points in the Prince's speech in reply seem to have struck some of his hearers as an unnecessary accentuation of His Highness' intention to withdraw the conduct of his administration as much as possible from the control of the International Commission, which was known to be the aim of his more intimate advisers, but that there was nothing to which the Commission could take exception. The demeanour of the population was described as being throughout sympathetic, but not enthusiastic. (F.O. 11875/146/14/53)]

No. 122.

Sir F. Elliot to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 10941/352/14/53.

(No. 56.) Confidential.

Sir :

Athens, D. March 5, 1914.

R. March 12, 1914.

In commenting, in his despatch No. 47 of the 28th of February,⁽²⁾ upon my despatch of the same number of the 22nd of that month,⁽³⁾ Mr. Lamb appears to do less justice to the loyalty of Monsieur Venizelos's policy in regard to Epirus, and even to distort the meaning of his very frank declaration to me that "if he had the slightest hope that the populations could maintain themselves unassisted against the Albanians he would have allowed them to try it."

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch was sent to Valona.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 103-4, No. 119.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 103, No. 118.]

There was a great temptation to this course, for there was a considerable probability that the Epirotes would be able to defend themselves long enough, at least, to give incontestable proof of their repugnance to the Albanian yoke, provided that an European Power did not intervene. It may be believed that Monsieur Venizelos was at one time bitten with the idea and encouraged the Epirotes in it; but since he realised the danger of it he has worked whole-heartedly against it. I have reason to believe that he has impounded a sum of 300,000 francs raised by the Epirotes for the needs of their cause, and that of the cheques which continue to be sent to them from abroad many are made payable to him (for greater security!) and he refuses to endorse them. Therefore if anyone has reason to complain of M. Venizelos's action, it is the Epirotes, whom he has by these means, and by the piece-meal evacuation, deprived of the prospect of making their resistance effectual. That he sympathises deeply with the Epirotes, who are misguided enough not to allow that Europe knows better than they do what is good for them, cannot be doubted: but he did not show it in his conversations with Monsieur Zographos, to whom on the contrary he used language which Monsieur Streit, who was present, evidently thought of excessive harshness. Allowances must be made for the difficulties of the position. Monsieur Venizelos still retains to an extraordinary degree the confidence of the country, but even he might forfeit it if he repressed with too strong a hand every manifestation of Epirote patriotism.

I have, &c.

F. ELLIOT.

No. 123.

Sir F. Elliot to Sir Edward Grey.

Athens, March 8, 1914.

F.O. 10259/10259/13/44.

D. 2.30 P.M.

Tel. (No. 49.)

R. 9 P.M.

Following communication made to Greek Minister for Foreign Affairs this morning by representatives of the Triple Alliance verbally and collectively⁽¹⁾:—

"1. In consequence of a proposal arising out of our (Austrian) initiative, the Commission of Control at Vallona has taken decision, and noted in to-day's protocol, that in Albania full equality of rights of religions and of employment of all languages there in use will be guaranteed.

"We, as well as Italy, will give greatest publicity to this decision. The two Cabinets declare to Greek Government that they entirely concur in this decision and will use their influence in favour of its complete execution.

"2. The two Cabinets adhere to what was agreed upon with M. Venizelos respecting rectifications of frontier. The two Cabinets will pursue realisation of these rectifications of frontier as soon as Greek troops have evacuated territory attributed to Albania.

"3. The rectification of frontiers of the kaza of Koritza desired by Greek Government is in contradiction with the London decisions and would be exclusively to disadvantage of Albania. The two Governments are therefore not in a position to give their consent to it, and must insist on complete evacuation of this district also in the sense of international decisions.

"4. With regard to wishes of Greece on points of detail, as, for instance, inclusion of suitable elements from South Albania in Albanian gendarmerie, the two Governments are in general prepared to take them into consideration and to recommend them to the Prince of Albania."

⁽¹⁾ [*op. G.P.*, XXXVI (II), pp. 524-5.]

MINUTES.

This is the third occasion within 6 months that Austria and Italy have taken separate action in regard to Albania. German support was only added in this instance as an after-thought, see Sir F. Elliot's tel[egram] No. 50 (10260), herewith.⁽²⁾

In October the two Powers threatened Serbia, and in November, Greece, without any reference to the international concert

I venture to submit that we should suggest to France and Russia a comm[unicatio]n to the Triple Alliance to the following effect:—

The recent action of the Triple Alliance Powers at Athens, following on what Austria and Italy did in Oct[ober] and Nov[ember] last,⁽³⁾ shews that we cannot count on any unity of action among the Powers in Albania. In the present instance, but for the courtesy of the German Minister, we should have known nothing of this latest 'démarche,' unless and until the Greek Gov[ernmen]t had appealed to us.

The discourtesy is all the more marked, as we were awaiting the views of Austria and Italy in order to answer the Greek reply.⁽⁴⁾

In these circumstances, it is useless for us to co-operate any longer in Albania, and we are therefore withdrawing our representative on the International Commission.

We are unlikely to have so good and opportune an occasion again to escape from a most ungrateful task.

G. R. C.
9.iii.14.

It is difficult to resist the belief that the Triple Alliance gov[ernmen]ts have made up their mind that the British gov[ernmen]t will put up with anything in regard to Albania. At the best, the present move is a deliberate discourtesy to H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment]; and I agree with Mr. Clerk that we ought now to consider whether we can allow ourselves to be persistently treated in this way.

I do not think that it would be of any use to ask once more for explanations. Explanations of a perfunctory and platitudinous character will be made, if we ask for them, as was done on the two previous occasions. But the Triple Alliance governments will continue to act with an ostentatious neglect of H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] as before.

To remain in the concert on these terms is neither useful nor dignified. If we were to retire it would not be so much laying down our flute, as calling attention to the fact that we are not admitted to the orchestra. There is much to be said, I think, in favour of our taking this opportunity to withdraw definitely from Albania, recalling our contingent and our delegate on the Commission of Control. It is however a question whether we can decide on this definitely without previously speaking to France and Russia. If they oppose withdrawal, we should I think make our consent to stay dependent on receiving a formal apology from at least the Austrian gov[ernmen]t, who, as appears from Sir F. Elliot's further telegrams Nos. 50 and 51 (10260) and (10293),⁽⁵⁾ are clearly the ringleader in this conspiracy.

Perhaps the best course would be for Sir E. Grey to speak to the Triple Alliance ambassadors first, and say that as their governments appear deliberately bent on excluding Great Britain from the concert as regards Albania, she does not consider it compatible with her dignity to remain outwardly associated with them in Albania itself, and that H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] must now seriously consider whether the moment has not come to withdraw altogether.

We might then wait and see what effect such language produces at Vienna, Rome, and Berlin.

Meanwhile Sir E. Grey could speak to the French and Russian ambassadors, explain what had passed with their Triple Alliance colleagues, and ask them to ascertain the views of their respective governments.

E. A. C.
M[ar]ch 9.
F. D. A.

(2) [Sir F. Elliot's telegram (No. 50) of March 8, D. 2.30 p.m., R. 9.15 p.m., stated that the communication had been "drafted in Vienna, apparently as an Austro-Italian one, but the German Minister was instructed to associate himself with it." (F.O. 10260/10259/14/53.)]

(3) [*v. supra*, pp. 32-3, No. 33, and *min.*; p. 59, No. 69, and *note* (1).]

(4) [*cp. infra*, pp. 235-7, No. 255, *encl.*]

(5) [For Sir F. Elliot's telegram (No. 50) *v. supra*, *note* (2). His telegram (No. 51) of March 9, D. 9 a.m., R. 10 a.m., is also not reproduced. It stated only that the "communication was made by the Austrian Minister on behalf of his two colleagues, not in their presence" (F.O. 10293/10259/14/53.)]

I have spoken to M. Cambon and have asked what M. Doumergue thinks of this proceeding⁽⁶⁾

I will deal with it with the Austrian and Italian Ambassadors here.⁽⁷⁾

E. G.
10311.

⁽⁶⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's despatch (No. 134) to Sir F. Bertie of March 9, 1914, recorded briefly this conversation. (F.O. 11034/10259/14/53.) On March 11, M. Paul Cambon and Count Benckendorff called on Sir Edward Grey to discuss the situation. *cp. infra*, p. 241, No. 260, note ⁽²⁾]

⁽⁷⁾ [*cp. immediately succeeding document, and note ⁽⁴⁾.*]

No. 124.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir M. de Bunsen.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 10842/10259/14/53.

Tel. (No. 52.)

Foreign Office, March 10, 1914, 11 p.m.

Austrian Ambassador has today informed me of communication made at Athens as described in Sir F. Elliot's telegram No. 49 of March 8.⁽²⁾ He was instructed to say that Austrian M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] had been in consultation with Italian Gov[ernmen]t and that this communication was the result. Austrian M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] had felt that time was of importance and would be saved by a verbal communication before other Powers were consulted. Austrian M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] had heard yesterday that communication had been made and he hoped it would accord with our views. Austrian Ambassador said but only as his own personal impression that the three Ministers at Athens must have been rather precipitate.

I said the bare facts were that Greece had made a communication to all the Powers⁽³⁾: I had last week asked the Austrian and Italian Ambassadors what was the view of their Gov[ernmen]ts as to the reply that should be made. These Gov[ernmen]ts had without saying anything to us made a separate reply on their own account at Athens and the Greek M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] had yesterday announced it to the Chamber. This being so it was useless for me to discuss the matter further: we must now either make no reply to Greece or make one separately according to our own ideas.

Austrian Ambassador repeated but again only as his personal opinion that the Ministers at Athens must have been too precipitate.

I said I personally thought there must have been some muddle but I could only deal with what Austrian M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] said.

Austrian Ambassador pressed me as to whether I did not think substance of reply favourable. I repeated that it was of no use for me to discuss it now. The Powers might consult together and act together, but if they were to act separately it was of no use to consult. As Greek M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] had been so prompt in announcing the communication to the Powers I supposed he considered it favourable but I could not discuss it. It was the form of the communication, the fact that three Powers had made it separately, and not the substance that I was concerned with.⁽⁴⁾

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated (for information) to Paris (No. 79); to St. Petersburg (No. 128); to Rome (No. 65); to Berlin (No. 67); to Athens (No. 38).]

⁽²⁾ [*v. immediately preceding document.*]

⁽³⁾ [*v. infra*, pp. 235-7, No. 255, *encl.*]

⁽⁴⁾ [In answer to the above telegram Sir M. de Bunsen telegraphed (No. 40) on March 11, D. 8 p.m., R. 10.30 p.m., that he had had a conversation with Count Forgach, who said that the Austro-Hungarian and Italian Ministers at Athens had been instructed to make the communication and were supported by their German colleague. Count Forgach hoped that the Triple Entente Powers would also support what had been said. (F.O. 10932/10259/14/53.) Sir M. de Bunsen again telegraphed on March 13 (No. 41), D. 12.35 p.m., R. 2.15 p.m., that Count Mensdorff had been instructed to make further explanations to Sir Edward Grey; there was no mistake about the communication but it had seemed to be an urgent question, of special interest to Italy and Austria-Hungary, and it was considered important to save time. (F.O. 11254/10259/14/53.) Sir Edward Grey's despatch (No. 37) of March 13, 1914, to Sir M. de

Bunsen described this further explanation (F.O. 11975/10259/14/53) The corresponding explanations given by the Marquis Imperiali are recorded in Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 67) of March 11, 1914, D 9 p.m., to Sir R. Rodd. It was stated that "the communication . . . was made entirely by mistake" Instructions had been sent to concert in drawing up a communication but not to make one (F.O. 11053/10259/14/53) The Italian explanation was borne out by that of Germany. This is recorded in Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 68) of March 10, 1914, D. 11 p.m., to Sir E. Goschen. (F.O. 10843/10259/14/53.) *cp. G.P., XXXVI* (11), pp. 523-4; pp. 527-8 *cp. also infra*, pp. 240-2, Nos. 259-60]

[*ED. NOTE*.—Consul-General Lamb reported in his despatch to Sir Edward Grey (No 57), D. March 17, R. March 23, that Turkhan Pasha, on the Prince of Wied's invitation, had accepted the task of forming a Cabinet, which was to be composed as follows:—

Turkhan Pasha, President of the Council and Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Essad Pasha, Minister of the Interior and of War.

Aziz Pasha Vrioni, Minister of Agriculture and of Mines.

Mufid Bey Libohovo, Minister of Justice.

Hassan Bey Prishtina, Minister of Posts and Telegraphs

Prenk Bib Doda Pasha, Minister of Public Works.

Dr. F. Adami, Minister of Finance

Dr. Tourtolis Bey, Minister of Public Instruction and of Health

The despatch described the previous services and other capacities of the Members of this Cabinet, and stated that the general opinion was that the influence of Essad Pasha was likely to be much stronger than that of any of the others. (F.O. 12814/12122/14/53.)

On March 19 Mufid Bey, the new Minister of Justice, resigned the post of Albanian Delegate on the Commission of Control. (F.O. 14343/12122/14/53.)

The Cabinet remained in office only until Essad Pasha's arrest on May 19. *v. infra*, pp. 115-7, Nos 130-3, and *Ed. note*. For the succeeding Government, *v. infra*, p. 117, *Ed note*.]

No. 125.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Elliot.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 14081/852/14/53.

(No. 81.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 23, 1914.

The Greek Minister gave me to-day the telegram of wh[ich] copy is enclosed herein (see paper herewith.)⁽²⁾

He said that the position of the Greek Government was becoming positively dangerous. They could do nothing to influence the situation in Epirus. He asked my sympathy for the position in which M. Venizelos was placed.

I said that I had every sympathy for M. Venizelos, and I recognised the difficulties. But I could only tell the Minister frankly that it would take a long time to get the Powers to agree upon any answer to the Greek Government about the southern frontier of Albania going beyond what Austria and Italy had already said. This was the inference that I derived from such communications as I received.

The Greek Minister argued against this view.

I said that I did not wish to convey that there were no Powers who were prepared to go further than what had already been said by Austria and Italy, but agreement between the Powers could take place only on something that commanded the assent of all of them. I could only tell him what I had done as a fact, and I could not argue about it.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch was repeated to Paris (No 178); to Vienna (No. 46); to Berlin (No. 91); to Rome (No. 82); to St. Petersburg (No. 129).]

⁽²⁾ [Not reproduced. It referred to the position in Epirus.]

No. 126.

Sir M. de Bunsen to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 14967/352/13/44.

Tel. (No. 47.)

Vienna, April 4, 1914.

Minister for Foreign Affairs has shown me a telegram from Austrian Minister at Durazzo, expressing anxiety caused by activity of Epirus bands and the insufficiency of the gendarmerie to deal with the situation. According to a telegram received at Durazzo from Metropolitan in Koritza, Epirotes have been greatly strengthened by accession of Greek regular troops. Koritza is said to be in flames, Dutch gendarmerie officer wounded, and country at the mercy of insurgents.

Minister for Foreign Affairs, though outwardly calm, appeared to me to be considerably upset by realisation of events which have been so often foretold. He said that fortunately understanding with Italy was closer than perhaps it had ever been before. He regretted that negotiations between the Dutch colonel of gendarmerie and chief of the Epirotes should have been broken off, and thought best prospect of peace lay in their resumption at Durazzo simultaneously with immediate evacuation by Greek troops, who not only encouraged insurgents by their presence and led them to think that decision of the Powers regarding southern frontier of Albania may yet be reversed, but even went over in large numbers to the insurgents.

⁽¹⁾ [The text given above is taken from the *Confidential Print*, as the original decypher cannot be traced.]

[ED. NOTE.—Consul-General Lamb's despatch (No 82), D April 16, R. May 2, 1914, forwarded to Sir Edward Grey the draft Organic Statute for Albania, drawn up by the International Commission of Control at Valona. (F.O. 19379/7204/14/53)]

No. 127.

Sir R. Rodd to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 18041/18041/14/53.

(No. 142.)

Rome, D. April 21, 1914.

Sir,

R. April 25, 1914.

I have the honour to report that I saw the Minister for Foreign Affairs this morning on his return from his visit to Count Berchtold at Abbazia, where he had spent five days in the company of his Austro-Hungarian Colleague.

He did not wait for me to put any questions to him but began at once by saying that he thought that his conversations with Count Berchtold had served a useful purpose. As was inevitable on such occasions the papers were full of all sorts of assumptions of what had taken place, but my experience would enable me to realize that undue significance was apt to be attached to such meetings. In the first place there had been no exchange of views about the Mediterranean or about zones of influence, and all the suggestions of the press to that effect were purely fantastic. No new ground had been broken and the only questions discussed were current ones, of which the Albanian difficulty bulked largest as most directly affecting the two countries. The Albanian situation was causing him considerable anxiety and the position of the Prince did not seem well assured. He had discussed at length with Count Berchtold what might be done to improve it. There were three aspects of the Albanian question which they had to consider. The settlement of the Northern frontier with Montenegro and Servia, the internal position, and the difficulties with Greece on the Southern frontier. In the north for the moment the most urgent matter was the trouble with Montenegro and the reluctance of the Hoti and Gruda tribes to accept the decisions taken as to their future allegiance. It had been suggested that the International Com-

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King.]

mission should first settle the frontier with Montenegro, and leave the Serbo-Albanian frontier until later. In view of the conditions which had recently developed both he and Count Berchtold were in favour of this proposal. Not altogether disassociated from it was a suggestion which had been made by Colonel Phillips that a portion at any rate of the International contingent at Scutari should be moved to the region in question. He was personally disposed to regard this suggestion with favour though he did not know whether it had yet come under your consideration, or what you would think of it. It seemed to him that the presence on the spot of troops of those countries which were supposed rather to favour the Montenegrin view might contribute to disarming opposition. Count Berchtold had objected that the international contingents were not sufficiently strong to enable them to detach a force, and had dwelt on the principle which had been laid down that the radius of international activity was not to extend beyond a zone of ten kilometres outside Scutari. But he surmised that the real grounds for his demurring to this proposal was his desire to keep the sphere in question more exclusively under Austro-Hungarian influence. He thought, however, that if the Powers were disposed to favour such a suggestion Count Berchtold's reluctance could be overcome.

As regards the internal situation in Albania they had agreed to recommend very considerable concessions to the Epiotes, in fact all such concessions as could be given without entailing a disintegration of the new Albanian State, by demands for similar concessions from other units in the country, which would tend to that result.

As regards the Southern frontier it remained to be seen whether the reply of the Powers to the Greek note⁽²⁾ would now bring about the immediate evacuation of Epirus by the Greek troops, which he felt would greatly facilitate the situation for the Albanian Government, as, so long as they remained there, the Epiotes derived from them a sort of moral support for resistance. He had learned from Athens that the Russian Minister had as yet received no instructions. The Russians were apt to be behind the other Powers, but it was desirable that the reply should be presented with as little delay as possible. Also it appeared that there was a slight verbal discrepancy in the instructions given to the representatives of those Powers who had received them, as to what was to be said to the Greek Government verbally as regards evacuation. The Italian Minister had been instructed to request that the evacuation might no longer be delayed, the word employed being "domandare," which has not the peremptory significance of the English word demand, but is equivalent to "demander" in French. The Austro-Hungarian Minister had been instructed to say that his Government now "expected" (erwarten) that the evacuation would ensue, whereas we and the French had only expressed a "hope" to that effect. There was not much difference really, but he learned from Athens that the more forcible word "expect" would be appreciated by the Greek Government as giving them a somewhat stronger reason for acting on the communication from the Powers.

He had discussed with Count Berchtold the contingency, which he hoped would not arise, of Monsieur Venizelos resigning, and a new Minister being less disposed to give effect to the wishes of the Powers. It would be inevitable that Italy and Austria-Hungary should in such an actuality find means of expressing their dissatisfaction, but so far as practical measures were concerned they had not arrived at any conclusion beyond advising the Albanian Government to continue with more energy the measures which had already been initiated of organizing a militia with perhaps some further addition of foreign officers. Monsieur Venizelos seemed to be the only man in Greece who was strong enough to carry out the policy laid down by the Powers, and his withdrawal from office would make the difficulties much greater. I was, however, unable to elicit from His Excellency any admission that he and his colleague had agreed to contemplate separate coercive action.

I then observed that I had seen some quotations from the Vienna papers, reproduced here, (? referring) to Austrian concessions in Asia Minor, and I said I

(2) [*v. infra*, pp. 247-8, No. 267, and *encl.*; pp. 248-9, No. 268.]

presumed that these had been discussed with Count Berchtold. The Marquis di San Giuliano said that he had thought it best not to adopt an attitude of opposition to the Austrian desire to secure a railway concession, but he did not think that the Austro-Hungarian Government were as yet very clear as to what they did want. It was more a vague desire not to be the only great Power which had obtained no economic facilities from the Porte. A short line of railway east of Adalia had been spoken of, but he did not think the scheme was a very practical one, or one which would conflict with the concessions he was trying to obtain.

I have, &c.

RENNELL RODD.

No. 128.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 20381/1155/14/53.

(No. 269.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, May 5, 1914.

The French and Russian Ambassadors spoke to me to-day of the Memorandum given by the Servian Minister as to a strategic frontier line in the neighbourhood of Prizrend and Dibra. The line at present went so close to these two places that the Albanians could positively fire into these towns from the heights near. It was only reasonable that the Servians should have the protection for which they asked.

I said that my recollection was that, according to independent information, the violations of the frontier by Albanians, of which the Servians had complained, had arisen from the fact that, when the Servians evacuated Albanian territory in accordance with the decision of the Powers, they took with them the cattle belonging to the Albanians, and the Albanians had come over the frontier in pursuit of their own cattle. There had been further trouble because the Albanians were denied access to places which had been allocated to Servia, but which were the natural markets for the Albanians to secure supplies. It seemed to me, "prima facie," quite reasonable that the Albanians should not have the heights that commanded Prizrend and Dibra: but, if this point was conceded, there ought to be a clear understanding that the Servians did admit the Albanians to the markets necessary to them for securing supplies.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch was repeated to St. Petersburg (No. 172). It is endorsed as having been sent to Colonel Granet (No. 9) on May 9.]

No. 129.

Sir Edward Grey to Colonel Granet.

F.O. 20326/1155/14/53.

Tel. (No. 4.)

Foreign Office, May 11, 1914, 6 p.m.

Your despatch No. 11 of May 1.⁽¹⁾

I have informed French and Russian Ambassadors that on your own initiative before receiving any instructions from me you had said to your Russian Colleague that the line selected at Dibra might be extended further to the North so as effectually to secure the defence of the town.

In reply to request of Russian and French Ambassadors I have said that both at Dibra and Prizrend you will support such modifications as are necessary to give Servia

⁽¹⁾ [Colonel Granet's despatch (No. 11), D. May 1, R. May 7, 1914, described in detail the difficulties of the International Commission for the Delimitation of the Northern Frontier of Albania, and enclosed a map showing the delimitation proposed by the various Powers. (F.O. 20326/1155/14/53.)]

strategic security, but that I agree with your reservation that no more Albanian villages should be ceded to Servia than the military situation requires. You should act accordingly.

I have impressed upon French and Russian Ambassadors that Servians should in each case give Albanians fair access to necessary markets.

I have informed French and Russian Ambassadors of my telegram No. 2 to you of May 7.⁽²⁾

⁽²⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 2) of May 7, 1914, D. 8 P.M., instructed Colonel Granet, at the request of the French and Russian Governments, to support "some small modifications of frontier favourable to Montenegro and not incompatible with reasonable latitude given by decisions of Conference of Ambassadors in London." (F.O. 20380/1155/14/53.)]

No. 130.

Consul-General Lamb to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 22521/22521/14/53.

Durazzo, D. May 19, 1914.

Tel. (No. 97.)

R. May 20, 1914.

An armed movement having manifested itself in the interior, of which Essad was suspected of being the instigator, the latter was arrested this morning, after two shells had been fired into his house, and was conveyed on board the Austrian man-of-war "Szigetvár."

At the request of the Prince, Italian flotilla of eleven torpedo-boat destroyers, with the cruiser "Vittor Pisani," was recalled from Vallona last night, and landed 140 men, who, with 60 Austrians, are guarding the palace and the legations.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Paris (as No. 139); to Rome (as No. 124); to Berlin (as No. 130); to Vienna (as No. 89); to St. Petersburg (as No. 218). The text given above is taken from the *Confidential Print*, as the original decypher cannot be traced.]

No. 131.

Consul-General Lamb to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 22522/22521/14/53.

Durazzo, D. May 19, 1914.

Tel. (No. 98.)

R. May 20, 1914.

My immediately preceding telegram of to-day.⁽²⁾

Arrest of Essad appears to have been due to Austrian advice.

Albania is now practically without any Government and the Prince hopelessly perplexed.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Paris (as No. 140); to Rome (as No. 125); to Berlin (as No. 131); to Vienna (as No. 90); to St. Petersburg (as No. 219). The text given above is taken from the *Confidential Print*, as the original decypher cannot be traced.]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

[*ED. NOTE*.—Consul-General Lamb reported more fully in his despatch (No. 104), D. May 19, R. May 25. He said that Austro-Hungarian influence had apparently prevailed upon the Prince to have Essad Pasha arrested. It had been for some time a matter of common report that Essad Pasha had been intriguing with the Mussulmans of the interior, to raise armed bands to concentrate on Durazzo and demand a Mussulman Prince. Some of these bands had already appeared at Tirana and even at Shiak, about 6 miles from Durazzo. The continuing despatch (No. 105) said that there were between 3,000 and 6,000 men implicated, and that there had been some fighting. Mr. Lamb stated further that a quarrel between Essad Pasha and the Dutch officer commanding the Gendarmerie seemed to have precipitated the crisis. When the order for his arrest was given, Essad, with his house full of armed retainers, refused to surrender except to the Prince himself or to the Italian

Minister. The Dutch officer therefore dropped two shells on his house, and he gave himself up. Mufid Bey, the Minister of Public Works, accused of aiding and abetting Essad, was also put under arrest in his own house.

Consul-General Lamb said further that in his opinion the only measure to save the situation would be an international occupation on the system adopted in Crete (F.O. 23321/22521/14/53; 23530/22521/14/53). On May 25 Sir Edward Grey replied by telegram (No. 63) that "In the light of repeated incidents in the past H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] can have no confidence that co-operation between all the Powers is really desired equally by all of them, or likely to be secured, unless the situation is radically altered." (F.O. 22838/22521/14/53.) *cp. infra*, pp. 116-7, No. 133, and *min*.

Consul-General Lamb reported further in his despatch (No. 105), D. May 20, R. May 26, on the critical character of the situation, which he described as even worse than it was before Essad Pasha's arrest. Sir Edward Grey's reply is given *infra*, pp. 121-2, No. 138. Before the reply was drafted, Sir Edward Grey minuted Consul-General Lamb's despatch as follows:—

"In explaining to Mr. Lamb it would be well to point out that Austria apparently does not want real international action. Italy desires it only to prevent being left alone with Austria but will continue under cover of it to play for her own hand. That it would be difficult in any case to work a real condominium of 6 Powers, but that the action of Austria and Italy and their special interests make it impossible and that therefore we do not propose ourselves to take further steps to establish an international occupation or condominium. E. G." (F.O. 23530/22521/14/53)]

No. 132.

Sir Edward Grey to Consul-General Lamb.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 22522/22521/14/53.

Tel. (No. 59.)

Foreign Office, May 20, 1914.

Your tel[egram]s Nos. 97 and 98.⁽²⁾

It seems to me that the Prince should not have taken a step of this surprising nature without giving previous or at least simultaneous information as to the reasons for it to the International Commission.

I certainly cannot accept any responsibility for the consequences and it may end in our having to withdraw from the international commission being no longer able to accept responsibility for consequences of action to which we were not a party. Responsibility in that event would be left rightly to those who were a party to it.

But I shall await further information as to the circumstances and the advice on which the Prince acted.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Paris (No. 141); to St. Petersburg (No. 221), with the instruction to "inform M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs]."] It was repeated to Berlin (No. 132); to Vienna (No. 91); to Rome (No. 126), "for information only"; to Colonel Phillips (No. 1) "for confidential information," on May 21.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 115, Nos. 130-1.]

No. 133.

Consul-General Lamb to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 23756/22521/14/53.

(No. 107.) Confidential.

Sir,

Durazzo, D. May 22, 1914.

R. May 27, 1914.

I venture to offer the following observations in regard to the subject of your telegram No. 59 of the 20th instant,⁽²⁾ to which I replied yesterday in my No. 100.⁽³⁾

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. immediately preceding document.*]

⁽³⁾ [Consul-General Lamb's telegram (No. 100), D. May 21, R. May 22, 1914, is not reproduced as its substance is repeated above. (F.O. 22838/22521/14/53.)]

It is unfortunately incontestable that, since the arrival of the Prince in March, the Government of this country has been directed (or sought to be directed, since it would be difficult to say that any definite direction has been given to it) by the Ministers of Austria and Italy, just as before his arrival, it was, naturally in a less pronounced manner, by the Consulates of the same two Powers.

As the object which these two Powers have in view is not the advantage of the country so much as the securing of a position of special predominance for themselves, the system is naturally disastrous for the country and has brought it to the verge of complete disaster. If continued in, it must inevitably lead to open conflict between the two Powers concerned with the resulting danger of serious international complications.

The remedy however, in my humble opinion, is not to be found in the withdrawal of the remaining Powers from the International Control but, on the contrary, in their insistence on participation on an equal footing in every measure that is adopted in regard to Albania.

This is the desire of all those elements in the population whose opinion is worth considering.

If the Commission has of late been kept in the background, the fault has lain at least as much with the Commission itself, (i.e. with those members of it who have preferred that it should be so) as with the Government, the better elements of which only needed encouragement to seek its support.

I have, &c.

HARRY H. LAMB.

MINUTES.

Qu[ery] Suggest to Mr. Lamb that he should, if a suitable opportunity offers, advise the Prince that in his own interest he should insist on receiving counsel from the International Commission and submit to it in the first instance any suggestions that may be made to him by one or the other Power singly, connected with matters of administration of general policy which fall within the Commission's competency.

E. A. C.

May 28.

A. N.

I do not like to advise the Prince now to consult the International Commission more than he has done: he will perhaps promise to do so if the Commission is backed by international troops and we are not prepared to send British troops. It will be better to confine our action to pointing the moral of the past.

Point out to Mr. Lamb that had the Prince insisted on receiving counsel from the International Commission upon suggestions made to him from any single outside source some of his present troubles might have been avoided.⁽¹⁾

E. G.

⁽¹⁾ [*cp. infra*, pp. 121-2, No. 138.]

[*ED. NOTE.*—On May 29 Consul-General Lamb wrote to inform Sir Edward Grey (Despatch No. 115, D. May 29, R. June 4) that the Prince of Albania had succeeded in forming a new government, in which Turkhan Pasha retained the Presidency of the Council. Only three other members of the previous Cabinet (*v. supra*, p. 111, *Ed. note*) were retained, two of them in their original posts, Mufid Bey and Tourtolis Bey; Prenk Bib Doda became Minister for Foreign Affairs. No Minister of War was appointed to succeed Essad Pasha (F.O. 24918/12122/14/53.)]

Sir Edward Grey to Sir R. Rodd.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 24735/22521/14/53.

Tel. (No. 137.)

Foreign Office, June 4, 1914, 4 p.m.

Your telegram No. 88 of June 2.⁽²⁾

If any communiqué is made it must be to the effect that H[is] M[ajesty's] Gov[ernmen]t, while not raising objection to any other Powers sending troops to Durazzo, do not propose themselves to take part in a military occupation of parts of Albania other than Scutari, but, if all the Powers who have ships in the Mediterranean decide to send ships to Durazzo, H[is] M[ajesty's] Gov[ernmen]t will send a ship to co-operate in protecting the person of the Prince.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Paris (No. 159); to Berlin (No. 145); to Vienna (No. 101); to St Petersburg (No. 239); to Durazzo (No. 72)]

⁽²⁾ [Sir R. Rodd's telegram (No. 88) of June 2, 1914, stated that the Marquis di San Giuliano had suggested that it would have "a salutary and calming effect if it were known that in the event of a further crisis arising at Durazzo His Majesty's Government would send a ship of war if the other Powers did so." (F.O. 24735/22521/14/53)]

No. 135.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 25878/22521/14/53.

(No. 211.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, June 4, 1914.

M. de Etter, in the course of his conversation with me to-day, remarked on the danger that would arise if Serbia took matters into her own hands about Albania. He heard that she had threatened that she could not keep quiet if one or two Powers acted alone in Albania. He also asked me how I thought that Austria and Italy would get on if they were left alone in Albania.

I said that I thought they would get on badly. With regard to Serbia, I thought that she ought to be told that, so long as the boundaries of Albania that had been settled internationally were observed, she had no occasion for interfering, whether it was one or two Powers or all the Powers who took action in Albania itself. Of course, if the Albanian frontiers were not observed, Serbia would have to take measures in her own territory to protect herself; but I could not see that she had a case for taking action because of what went on internally in Albania, so long as the frontiers were not violated.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet. It was repeated to Belgrade (No. 46) on June 9.]

No. 136.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir R. Rodd.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 25645/22521/14/53.

(No. 167.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, June 4, 1914.

The Italian Ambassador came to see me to-day about Albania, and prefaced his remarks by saying, with reference to our disinclination to send troops to Durazzo,⁽²⁾

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet. It was repeated to Consul-General Lamb.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 118, No. 134.]

that there had been in the past many things in connection with Albania which were obvious [*sic*], but that it was not too late to amend. It was evident that he meant that things had been done by Austria and Italy which would naturally account for our disinclination to participate in Albanian responsibilities: but that, if we would continue our participation, we should have less cause for complaint in future.

The Ambassador went on to say, on the instructions of the Marquis di San Giuliano, that the Italian Government had endeavoured to keep the two limits of the intervention of Europe and the activity of the two Adriatic Powers. Italy had always desired real internationalisation, and all that had happened had been a compromise between her views and those of the Austrian Government. They felt now that the Prince of Wied ought to be kept in Albania, and that the arrangements come to by the International Commission and M. Zographos about Epirus should be agreed to.⁽³⁾

Finally, the Marquis di San Giuliano made an appeal to us to make proposals as to what we should be prepared to do in Albania, and to stipulate the conditions on which our proposals would be based. The Marquis di San Giuliano would do his best to get Austria to accept any reasonable conditions that we proposed.

I said that public opinion here would not be favourable to undertaking responsibility for Albania. For us to make proposals and stipulate conditions would be to propose a policy, and I could not undertake this responsibility. The sending of troops to Durazzo we regarded as the beginning of a military occupation of Albania. We knew by experience that to send a few troops meant being confronted with a demand to send more troops, and one thing led to another. I doubted whether, even if I recommended it to the Cabinet, they would agree to send British troops to Durazzo; and I was not disposed to recommend it. On the other hand, I felt that we had some responsibility to the Prince. One suggestion had been that we should send troops solely to protect the person of the Prince. We felt that this could be done as effectively by sending ships, and this course would be more convenient, as it was much easier to withdraw ships than troops. I had, therefore, telegraphed this morning to say that we would send a ship for the protection of the person of the Prince at Durazzo, if all the other Powers who had ships in the Mediterranean were prepared to send one.⁽⁴⁾ By this I meant that, though we should be glad if Russia sent a ship, yet, as Russia had not joined in the naval demonstration or the occupation of Scutari,⁽⁵⁾ we should not make the abstention of Russia from sending a ship to Durazzo a reason for abstaining ourselves. In conclusion, I said that a condominium of six Powers was most difficult under the most favourable conditions⁽⁶⁾; but if even one of the Powers worked against it, it becomes impossible; and I instanced the proceedings in connection with the Albanian Bank.

The Ambassador admitted my objections as regards the Bank, but said that Italy could not always object to every thing that Austria wished. He took a gloomy view of what might happen in Albania. He doubted if Italian public opinion would allow Italy to send troops to co-operate with Austrian troops alone; and, even if there were action by the two Powers alone, Servia had already intimated that, if action were taken by one or two Powers without the others, she would feel obliged to do something, and this might precipitate a European war.

⁽³⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp. 103-4, No. 119. Consul-General Lamb reported, in his despatch (No. 103), D. May 17, R. May 23, 1914, the business transacted at the meetings between the International Commission of Control and the Epirote delegates at Corfu, from May 9 to May 17. After much discussion with M. Zographos and the other delegates a formula had been drawn up, and the members of the Commission undertook to submit it to their respective Governments. (F.O. 23057/352/14/53.) Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 83) of June 9, 1914, authorized Mr. Lamb to join in a formal notification of approval of the Corfu agreement if his colleagues were similarly instructed. (F.O. 25915/352/14/53.)]

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 118, No. 134.]

⁽⁵⁾ [*cp. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II), pp. 641-2, No. 791; p. 786, *Ed. note*. For further references, *v. ibid.*, pp. 1122-8, SUBJECT INDEX *sub* ALBANIA.]

⁽⁶⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp. 115-6, *Ed. note*.]

I said that M. Grouich had said something of this sort in Belgrade, but I did not see that Serbia had any concern in the matter, so long as the boundary of Albania, as laid down by international decision, was respected.

[I am, &c.]
E. G[REY].

No. 137.

Sir E. Goschen to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 25529/25524/14/18.

(No. 229.)

Sir,

Berlin, D. June 5, 1914.

R. June 8, 1914.

. . . .⁽²⁾ Referring to Albania the Emperor said that he was in entire agreement with His Majesty's Government as to the non-despatch of troops to Durazzo. He did not care in the least what other Powers did, but He certainly was not going to send a single German soldier. He had objected to Prince Wied's candidature, had tried to dissuade him from going to Albania, and had warned both the Austrian and Italian Governments that the Prince, with all his good points, had not the qualifications, still less the experience, necessary for a ruler of a new and turbulent principality. Everyone, including the Prince, had turned a deaf ear to his advice, and He was not now going to risk the lives of German soldiers to get the Prince out of the hole in which he had landed himself. He had been certain all along that the Prince would come to grief sooner or later, and it had been sooner. Thanks, His Majesty's said, to the loyalty and efficiency of the Dutch officers, Essad Pasha had been got rid of in the nick of time; had he been allowed to remain a few days longer Essad Pasha would, he felt quite certain, have assassinated, or caused to be assassinated, the Prince.

I presume that the cause of the Emperor's somewhat harsh language respecting the Prince is resentment that the latter had laid himself open to statements in the press that in a moment of panic he had deserted his post. The Emperor said that of course this was not true, as the Prince's personal courage was beyond all question, but he had in any case committed a grave error of judgment and had not had the strength of will to resist what he ought to have known was bad and probably interested advice. It was a bad business altogether and he rather hoped that the Prince would take the first opportunity of withdrawing from a position with which he was unable to cope, with as much dignity as was possible under the circumstances. His Majesty added that it was a mercy that the Prince had followed the advice given to him not to allow himself to be proclaimed King of Albania, as now he could, if forced to abdicate, return to Germany and live quietly on his estates under his own original title and without the prefix of "Ex-King."⁽³⁾

I have, &c.

W. E. GOSCHEN.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Prime Minister.]

⁽²⁾ [The omitted paragraphs refer to a State luncheon given at the New Palace at Potsdam on the occasion of the Emperor's birthday, to which all the members of His Majesty's Embassy at Berlin were invited.]

⁽³⁾ [The remaining paragraphs refer, in general terms, to the proposed visit of a British squadron to Kiel. *cp. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. XI, pp. 6-11, Nos. 6-8, and *encls.*]

[*ED. NOTE.*—Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 87) of June 13, 1914, D. 1.15 P.M., to Consul-General Lamb stated that as all the Powers had agreed to send a ship to Durazzo, and as the Austro-Hungarian and Italian Governments considered that the situation called for the early presence of vessels, Rear-Admiral Troubridge, commanding the 1st Cruiser Squadron, had been ordered to proceed to Durazzo forthwith in H.M.S. "Defence" (F.O. 26576/22521/14/53.)

From June 15-June 20 Durazzo was besieged by insurgents, and on the 17th Rear-Admiral Troubridge was asked by the Prince of Albania to bombard the attacking force, but the

Admiral's instructions would not permit of such action. He could only offer the Prince refuge at any time on board H.M.S. "Defence," but the Prince said that neither he nor his family would under any circumstances again embark in a foreign ship (F.O. 26979/22521/14/53; 26991/22521/14/53; 27554/22521/14/53; 28584/22521/14/53).

Consul-General Lamb's despatch (No. 128), D June 16, R June 23, 1914, gave a detailed account of the attack. Lieutenant-Colonel Thomson, the Director of Military Operations at Durazzo, was killed, and was succeeded by Major Kroom, a Dutch officer. (F.O. 28178/22521/14/53.) A flag of truce with offers of terms was sent to the insurgents on June 20 (F.O. 28647/22521/14/53) and a temporary armistice was concluded. On the 30th, however, the Prince asked Admiral Troubridge to establish a blockade of the coast to prevent the rebels from being provided with arms, but, again, the Admiral's instructions did not permit him to agree. As the Prince was practically a prisoner in his own palace, the Admiral advised him to consult the International Commission of Control. (F.O. 30529/22521/14/53.) For later events, *v. infra*, pp. 126-7, No. 141, and *encl.*; pp. 128-9, No. 143]

No. 138.

Foreign Office to Consul-General Lamb.

F.O. 23530/22521/14/53.

(No. 89.) Confidential.

Sir,

Foreign Office, June 17, 1914.

I am directed by Sec[retary] Sir E. Grey to state that he has given careful consideration to the opinion which you have expressed on various occasions since the outbreak of the recent crisis at Durazzo, that the best, if not the only, method of ensuring peace and order in Albania is by the employment of international troops.

There is of course no doubt that disciplined foreign soldiers, if sufficiently numerous, would eventually establish the Prince's authority throughout Albania more efficiently and more rapidly than any local forces which H[is] H[ighness] may contrive to raise, and it is even conceivable that had H[is] H[ighness] had at his disposal a comparatively small international detachment from Scutari at the time of Essad Pasha's arrest, the moral effect would have been sufficient to check the growth of the movement at Tirana in its early stages and thus enable H[is] H[ighness] to assert his authority in circumstances which would have enhanced his prestige so far as to secure him the obedience of all his subjects. But, apart from the facts that it was physically impossible to get the troops to Durazzo before events had reached a stage where only a large expeditionary force would have been effective, and that unless the Prince had shown unusual capacity for rapid and energetic decision he would probably have missed his very brief opportunity, there were serious questions of general policy to be weighed and considered before H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] could consent to British troops being actively employed against Albanian insurgents.

Had Albania been left as the spoils of war for the neighbouring Balkan States, neither Austria nor Italy would have acquiesced in such a partition and both Powers would have developed a policy of active interference in the Balkans that might easily have led to an European conflagration. To avert this, and to protect the Albanians from incorporation in alien states, the Conference of Ambassadors created the State of Albania and appointed an international Commission to suggest and work out the conditions under which the new State might take its place among the peoples of Europe, but the Powers did not thereby, either individually or collectively, assume any responsibility for constraining the Albanian tribes, by force of arms, to submit to the form of government which might seem, in the eyes of Europe, best adapted for their needs. In short, the policy of the Powers was to offer Albania the assistance of an experienced body of officials in framing a constitution and the loan of funds wherewith to make a start of administration, but not to take any steps to force Albania to follow one or other particular line of development.

This applies especially to Great Britain, whose direct interests with Albania are practically non-existent, and where public opinion would make it impossible to justify

the active employment of British troops, which might easily and inevitably have followed from the despatch of an international detachment to Durazzo.

But even had it proved possible to limit action to a peaceful occupation of the country, a condominium of the 6 Powers would merely invite failure. It may be doubted whether Austria would really be in favour of, and prepared to co-operate loyally in, joint action, while Italy would only accept in preference to being left alone with her rival, and would continue to play for her own hand. Even in the most favourable circumstances a condominium has rarely been attended with success, but hampered as such a measure would be by existing rivalries and suspicions, H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] could take no steps to further its establishment or to commit this country to any responsibility beyond that involved in readiness to protect, by the despatch of a ship of war, the persons of the Prince and others from actual physical danger. H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] would also be ready, in concert with the other Great Powers, to use their influence to restrain Albania's neighbours from infringing her frontiers, but within those frontiers it is for the Albanians themselves to evolve the gov[ernmen]t they require, not for the Powers to force upon them an administr[atio]n resting upon foreign bayonets.

The International Commission of Control was intended to supply the advice and experience which was lacking in the native element, and had the Prince invited their counsel upon suggestions made to H[is] H[ighness] separately by one or another Power, some of the troubles which now beset him might have been avoided. It is to be hoped that H[is] H[ighness], profiting by experience, may consult the Commission more freely in future and thus avail himself of the assistance which the Powers have placed at his disposal before finding himself in a position which impels him to ask for their armed support.

In conclusion, I am to point out that the presence of international troops at Scutari cannot be held to conflict with the above statement of the relations between Albania and the Great Powers. Those troops are merely the successors of the sailors who were originally landed for the protection of the naval officers who took over Scutari from the Montenegrins, and it is only owing to the fact that the Albanian Gov[ernmen]t has not yet been able to assume the administration of that town that the foreign detachments are still there. As soon as an Albanian governor is appointed, and an effective native administration established, the question of definite withdrawal of the troops will have to be considered, and meanwhile their duty is confined to the one specific purpose of carrying on the local direction of affairs in Scutari and Alessio.

[I am, &c.]

E[YRE] A. C[ROWE].

No. 139.

Sir R. Rodd to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 29147/28724/14/53.

(No. 235.) Confidential.

Sir,

Rome, D. June 23, 1914.

R. June 29, 1914.

I have had the honour to report to you by telegraph to-day⁽²⁾ the substance of certain observations made to me by the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs on the subject of alleged Italian intrigues in Albania, which he understood had met with some credence in London.

I have noticed that for some time past, in fact ever since the deportation of Essad and the bombardment of the Albanian Mussulmans who had assembled in the

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King. It was sent to Consul-General Lamb (as No. 119) on July 24.]

⁽²⁾ [Sir R. Rodd's telegram (No. 103) of June 23, 1914, D. 5-45 P.M., R. 9 P.M., is not reproduced as the contents are sufficiently indicated above. (F.O. 28382/28382/14/53).]

neighbourhood of Durazzo, the Austrian press has been making such charges against Italy, and most especially the "Neue Freie Presse" has conducted a very outspoken and violent campaign against this country. The Italian press has retaliated perhaps in rather mild terms, but with very marked resentment of what are described as disreputable calumnies. The newspaper war has even gone so far that certain publicists have recommended that the incompatibility of view between Austria and Italy in the Adriatic should be frankly admitted, and that it is of no use going on alienating other and older friendships in pursuit of a chimerical reconciliation. My Austrian colleague, I am told by one who should have reason to know, is anxious as to the relations which are re-establishing themselves, not between the Governments, but between the peoples, and the effect they may have on the Triple Alliance.

Such consistently maintained charges as are levelled against Italian agents in Albania can hardly be regarded as altogether imaginary. Indeed the long-standing rivalries which are known to have been encouraged in the past between the secret agents of Austria and Italy warrant the belief that their effect is still actively prevalent, and I have observed in Mr. Lamb's reports a tendency to suspect some such occult Italian intrigues, for which he cannot quite account. It is probable that the agents of both rivals are to blame. But at the present time I am disposed to acquit the Italian Government of any connivance, and to accept the assurance of the Minister for Foreign Affairs that if there had been any such underground action it is wholly unauthorised and disapproved. And this for the following reasons. It is impossible to see what interest Italy can have in trying to upset the régime which had been established. It might be an object to Austria to see Albania once more in the melting-pot, but it can hardly be an object to Italy, whose whole policy there has been governed by the fear of Austria, and whose only hope of checking the increase of Austrian influence on the opposite shore of the Adriatic has lain in the creation of an autonomous Albania. Italy's position is just now a very weak one. She has embarrassed her finances and finds difficulty in securing the acceptance of any scheme for their rehabilitation. She has brought upon herself the obligation to immobilise a large portion of her forces in Africa. Her internal situation is such as to cause serious preoccupation. She is in no position to embark on new adventures, and is in constant danger of a public exposure of the weakness she has struggled to conceal under a parade of sounding words and phrases. Even were she in a position to take more direct charge of the situation in Albania, public opinion would be averse from her taking action in concert with Austria, and she dare not act against her. The best chance for her would be the maintenance of the régime which has been established with the greatest available accession to it of international support.

It is therefore almost inconceivable that the Government, who have the best of reasons for knowing the weakness of their position, could have given any countenance or encouragement to the elements which seem destined to upset conditions which it is Italy's obvious interest to uphold.

I have, &c.

RENNELL RODD.

MINUTES.

I have felt all along the difficulty of seeing any ultimate end to account for the machinations of Austria and Italy in Albania, but I cannot altogether share Sir R. Rodd's acquittal of the Italian Gov[ernment]. Their agents may have exceeded their instructions, but jealousy and fear of Austrian supremacy in Albania account for Italian intrigues: so long as the pot is boiling, no one can be 'top dog' for very long, but if the pot is taken off the fire and allowed to settle, Italy may find herself definitely at the bottom: therefore, keep it on and add fresh fuel if necessary.

G. R. C.

30-vi-14

Surely the explanation is not so very recondite as Sir R. Rodd imagines. There is fairly conclusive evidence that the policy of the Italian government, and not only of their agents, has all along been to strengthen their own position in Albania by attracting to themselves the sympathies of the Mussulmans, who are naturally opposed to the Catholic Albanian party

leaning on Austria. In supporting the Mussulmans, the Italian gov[ernmen]t have, without probably being aware of it, supported the intrigues against the Prince. The Italian agents have been either blind to this danger, or have deliberately thought that opposition to the Austrian influence in Albania was more important than support of the Prince's government and authority.

E. A. C.
July 1.
A. N.
F. D. A.
E. G.

No. 140.

Sir M. de Bunsen to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 30843/30843/14/53.

(No. 124.) Confidential.

Vienna, D. June 26, 1914.

Sir,

R. July 6, 1914.

The Servian Minister asked to see me yesterday and we had a conversation about Balkan affairs. I referred to an article which had appeared in the "Tagblatt" and which evidently took it for granted that the appointment by King Peter of his son as Regent was equivalent to His Majesty's abdication and signified the triumph of the Chauvinist military party over those Servian statesmen who desire to keep the direction of affairs in the hands of the Civil Power. Monsieur Jovanovitch said there was no truth in all this. The King was completely broken in health and was incapable of facing, without danger to his life, the anxieties and fatigues of the electoral period which is about to be opened in Servia. Prince Alexander was well qualified to deal with the situation, and his more vigorous personality was better fitted than that of his father, in his present condition, to impress the people and to uphold the prestige of the throne through the impending political conflict. It was false to describe Prince Alexander as a fire-eater. His Royal Highness' political views were entirely sensible and moderate, and Monsieur Jovanovitch had had means of assuring himself that he sincerely desired a friendly settlement of outstanding questions with Austria-Hungary. The King had no idea of abdicating and had merely thought that the interests of the throne could be best secured by his temporary retirement behind the scene.

Monsieur Jovanovitch said his Government was painfully interested in the recent developments in Albania. The trouble had arisen from the dissensions between the Italians and the Austrians. Whatever the two Governments might say, the truth was that the two nations had each of them aimed at getting the upper hand in Albania at the expense of the other. On both sides the idea prevailed that money was to be made in Albania and that the prize was for the most enterprising and the most audacious. A game of grab ensued, with the natural result that each of the two nationalities intrigued against the other, that the task of setting up a Government was rendered impossible, and that a state of anarchy was produced in the interior which threatened to pervade the whole country. Albania had been created to stave off war between Austria and Russia, the latter country acquiescing in the rejection of the Servians from Durazzo on condition that an international State should take the place of Servia on the Adriatic coast. Now Austria and Italy were at loggerheads, and they would probably remain so as long as present arrangements with regard to Albania remained in force. How much better it would have been to allow Servia in the north and Greece in the south to undertake the task of governing Albania. But neither Austria nor Italy would hear of such a combination at present. Monsieur Jovanovitch wondered if the time would not come when they would see that the only way of avoiding a war between themselves over Albania is to allow Servia and Greece to take it over. From the Austrian point of view this would surely be a most desirable arrangement. Servia

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch was sent to Bucharest and to Belgrade.]

would be satisfied with gaining unhampered access to the sea. She would no longer be the enemy. Her energies would be concentrated on commercial expansion and internal reform, and she would cease casting her eyes beyond the Austro-Hungarian frontier. He knew that Austria was not yet educated up to this point, but it should be easy to reassure her. The Servian and Greek Adriatic ports could be neutralised by an international compact. They would be made incapable of serving any but a commercial purpose. The fear that Russia would use them as naval stations would thus be removed. The danger of the mouth of the Adriatic being bottled up would be for ever eliminated. The principal bone of contention between Austria and Italy would disappear. The Albanian experiment having now hopelessly broken down, Monsieur Jovanovitch could not help indulging in these dreams of the future. But Servia believed in her ultimate destiny and would do nothing to precipitate events. Time was surely working for her, and she was content to wait.

The French Ambassador tells me that he is hearing views similar to the above expressed by others besides the Servian Minister, and indeed it is not unnatural that people's minds should be casting about for an alternative to the scheme devised under Austrian and Italian pressure in the London Conference of Ambassadors,⁽²⁾ in the event of that scheme proving ultimately to be hopelessly unworkable. Monsieur Dumaine has heard lately, from a Russian source on which he relies, a good deal concerning the visit of the Emperor of Russia to Co[n]stantza. Roumania appears to have spared no effort to show in a worthy manner her appreciation of this act of Imperial favour. If His Excellency's informant is not mistaken, 4,300,000 francs were spent by the Roumanian Government on buildings and entertainments. But Roumania had not been seduced from the dominant position which she claimed to occupy as the Power best placed to control the destinies of the Balkan nations. She would be the ally of neither Russia nor the Triple Alliance. She had everything to gain from independence of either group of Powers. In the event of a great war, if Russia won she would gain Transylvania and the Bukowina; if Germany and Austria won, she would regain Bessarabia. She had no intention of blindly upholding the results of the peace of Bucharest. It was already clear that much of that piece of work required amending. But nothing should be done without her consent. She was already thinking of the advantage to be derived from a possible partition of Albania. By giving Servia an outlet to the sea, it would become possible to satisfy Bulgaria with a slice of Macedonia. Arrangements in short could be made which would enable the Balkan States to settle down peacefully and contentedly side by side.

After hearing Monsieur Dumaine's speculations to the above effect, I told His Excellency, who had not yet heard of the Austro-Italian proposal in question, that a scheme was under consideration which, if it proved practicable, might yet result in bolstering up the Prince of Albania for some time longer, namely the suggestion that a native Albanian force should be recruited and trained by officers of the international forces at Scutari.⁽³⁾ His Excellency thought the scheme worth trying, if only for the reason that if it should unfortunately fail, the Powers could no longer be reproached with any appearance of justice for leaving the Prince whom they had set up in the lurch.

I have, &c.

MAURICE DE BUNSEN.

⁽²⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 1, *Ed. note.*]

⁽³⁾ [Sir R. Rodd's telegram (No. 100) of June 22, 1914, had reported the proposal for the formation of an Albanian militia organized by the officers of the international force already at Scutari. The proposal had been made by the Austro-Hungarian Government to that of Italy. (F.O. 27933/33/14/53.) In Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 97) of June 25, 1914, D. 6 P.M., he enquired the views of Consul-General Lamb and Colonel Phillips. (F.O. 28830/33/14/53.) Sir Edward Grey informed Colonel Phillips, in his telegram (No. 17) of July 16, 1914, D. 7 P.M., that the question of financial support alone delayed the formation of such a force, although the Powers had agreed. (F.O. 32457/33/14/53.)]

No. 141.

Consul-General Lamb to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 32186/22521/14/53.

(No. 152.)

Sir,

Durazzo, D. July 11, 1914.

R. July 16, 1914.

As I had the honour of reporting to you in my telegram No. 152⁽²⁾ of this afternoon, the Prince of Albania yesterday evening invited to the Palace the Ministers of the four Great Powers that are diplomatically represented here and made to them, from written notes, a statement in which he ascribed the present hopeless situation of the country in the first place to the failure of the Powers to settle the question of Epirus in accordance with their own decisions and subsequently to their unwillingness to assist him in his successive difficulties, winding up with an appeal to them to urge their respective Governments to afford him adequate financial and military support and also to compel the Greek Government to evacuate the territories, ascribed by the Powers themselves to Albania, which its forces, avowed or unavowed, have usurped.

I understand that MUFID Bey, as Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs in the absence of TURKHAN Pasha,⁽³⁾ was intended to have made to my Russian colleague and to myself a similar communication on the part of the Prince, but MUFID, having resigned later in the evening, on the pretext that he had not been summoned to be present at this important colloquium with the foreign representatives, either did not receive these instructions in time or did not think it necessary to act on them.

His Highness does not appear to have made any direct allusion to his intention of abdicating in the event of no satisfactory reply being received from the Powers, but it is generally understood that this will be the inevitable result.

I am confidentially informed by Admiral TROUBRIDGE that the Prince detained Herr von Lucrus, when the other three Ministers took leave of him, and asked him what he thought he ought to do. Herr von Lucrus replied that, speaking not as German Minister but merely for himself as a German, he did not see what remained for the Prince to do but to go, to which the latter replied that he would be glad enough to do so, if he had anywhere to go to, implying that he felt himself unable to return to Potsdam.

I have, &c.

HARRY H. LAMB

P.S.—I am indebted to the courtesy of the Austrian Legation for the annexed copy of the Prince's notes which were communicated to the four Ministers at the conclusion of the audience above reported.

[H. H. L.]

Enclosure in No. 141.

Notes of the appeal made by the Prince of Albania to the foreign representatives for transmission to their governments.

Vous savez que les Epirotes ont pris KORYTZA et sont avancés sur toute la ligne vers le Nord. Les Gouvernements des Puissances par lesquels je suis désigné comme

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

⁽²⁾ [Consul-General Lamb's telegram (No. 152), D. July 11, R. July 12, 1914, is not reproduced as the contents are sufficiently indicated above. It was repeated to all the Embassies, with instructions to ascertain the views of the governments to which they were accredited. (F.O. 31512/22521/14/53.) Sir H. Rumbold, in his telegram (No. 84) of July 14, 1914, expressed the general view that nothing could be done for the Prince of Albania beyond hastening the formation of the Bank in order to give the Prince more money. The Great Powers had sent ships but could not all agree to send troops. The Austro-Hungarian and Italian Governments were anxious to prevent arms from reaching the insurgents by sea. The revolt at Epirus was stated to be the most serious feature of the situation. (F.O. 32001/22521/14/53.)]

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 117, *Ed. note*.]

Prince de ce pays et qui m'ont toutes promis leur secours, avaient neutralisé l'Albanie en fixant ses frontières. Dès mon arrivée ici, j'ai eu des difficultés avec l'Épire qui était encore occupé par les Grecs. Sur les conseils des Grandes Puissances, l'Albanie a fait des concessions aux Epirotes et remettant enfin la cause entre les mains de la Commission de Contrôle,⁽¹⁾ a accepté l'arrangement de Corfou par lequel les Epirotes ont reçu de grands avantages. Pour ne pas être sans force armée contre les bandes en Épire, l'Albanie a essayé de réunir quelques milices suivant les conseils de quelques Grandes Puissances. Le rassemblement des milices dans le centre de l'Albanie a été exploité par quelques puissances étrangères pour organiser une révolte contre le Gouvernement pour empêcher une action énergique dans le Sud. Ainsi paralysé dès le début par la cause de l'Épire qui était soutenu par la Grèce, le Gouvernement n'a pu faire aucun travail dans le pays et a dû dépenser son argent pour défendre ses frontières garanties par les Grandes Puissances. Maintenant ZOGRAPHOS profitant des difficultés intérieures a attaqué et pris KORYTZA quoique nous eussions conclu un armistice. Je suis persuadé que l'Albanie en quelques années aurait atteint un grand développement, mais des Puissances étrangères l'ont empêché. Pour avoir une période de paix il faut de l'argent et des troupes étrangères. C'est pourquoi je vous prie d'insister auprès de vos gouvernements pour l'emprunt qu'on m'avait promis et pour l'envoi des troupes internationales ou roumaines et de faire une pression sur la Grèce pour qu'elle retire ses troupes de l'Épire et force ZOGRAPHOS à accepter l'accord de Corfou et de renvoyer les bandes grecques qui ont encore dernièrement incendié plusieurs villages albanais.

Le Prince a ajouté :

Si les Grandes Puissances s'empressent de nous accorder ces secours, nous aurons dans peu de temps l'ordre dans le pays et on pourra recommencer à travailler. Comme les autres pays balkaniques ont eu des secours matériels des Grandes Puissances pour se développer, l'Albanie en a aussi besoin.

⁽¹⁾ [cp. *supra*, p. 103, No. 118; pp. 118-9, No. 136, and *note* ⁽³⁾]

[*ED. NOTE*.—On July 23 Consul-General Lamb in his despatch (No. 163) reported a letter addressed by the Shiak insurgents to the Representatives of the Six Great Powers, dated July 22, which was practically an ultimatum to the Prince of Albania. All the delegates to the Commission of Control, except the Austro-Hungarian, considered that the Prince should withdraw, nominally for a time, leaving the Regency in the hands of the International Commission. (F.O. 34497/32945/14/53.)

The work of the Commission was interrupted by the outbreak of war. v. *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. XI, p. 307, No. 574. Consul-General Lamb, the last to go, was withdrawn on August 12. (F.O. 38441/34835/14/53.) The Prince was expected to leave the country on August 31 (F.O. 45068/352/14/53), and he actually arrived in Venice on September 5. (F.O. 46812/33901/14/53; 46817/33901/14/53)

Later in the year Essad Pasha was elected President and Commander-in-Chief in Albania. (F.O. 61672/44754/14/53.)

No. 142.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Akers-Douglas.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 33459/29582/14/53.

(No. 36.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 21, 1914.

M. Take Jonesco came to see me to-day. He informed me that he had seen the King of Roumania and the Prime Minister. They did not wish to send Roumanian troops to Albania, but they were afraid that Albania might disturb the peace of

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

Europe, and they would send troops if the Powers would address a request to them to do so.⁽²⁾ It would, however, be essential that the Powers should each send 100 or 50 men of their own, to give the force an international appearance. Otherwise, the Prince of Wied being related to the King of Roumania, it would look as if the sending of Roumanian troops was a dynastic affair. Roumania could send troops only if it was clear that it was European international action that required them to be sent. He spoke with great anxiety of what might happen between Austria and Serbia, and of the danger of Albania embroiling things.

I explained to him our reluctance to send British troops into Albania. I said that two Powers, Germany and Russia, would certainly not send any: and I asked him whether it would be sufficient for Roumania if Austria and Italy each sent 100 or 50 men.

He replied that Roumania would certainly not send troops if only these two Powers sent some. It would be essential that at least we and France should send troops, as well as Austria and Italy. He said that we had been quite right in agreeing to the creation of an autonomous Albania, as it was really the price of peace. Though many people did not believe it, he was convinced that Austria would have gone to war during the Balkan crisis if the creation of an Albanian State had not been agreed to.

I said that this was why we had willingly consented to the creation of Albania. We had no special interests of our own in Albania, and we had feared that Albania would be very troublesome. My view was that it was for Austria and Italy—to whose wish alone the creation of the State of Albania was due—to deal with the troubles there.

M. Take Jonesco admitted the logic of this, but he said that, in the first place, there was danger of Italy and Austria falling out between themselves.

I admitted this to be a drawback, for it would lead to trouble in Europe.

M. Take Jonesco said that, in the second place, even if Austria and Italy came to an agreement as to their action in Albania—which he thought not impossible—the fact of Austria occupying the northern part of Albania and thus stretching further round Serbia would be sure to make difficulties with Serbia.

I said that, for the moment, Austrian feeling against Serbia was so embittered since the murder of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand that the question of what demand Austria might make upon Serbia, without any reference to Albania, overshadowed any possible risks that were inherent in the Albanian question.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

(2) [On July 6 a suggestion was received from Austria-Hungary and Italy that Rumania should send 3,000 troops to keep order in Albania. (F.O. 30577/29582/14/53.) Herr von Bethmann Hollweg was reported to agree. (F.O. 30927/29582/14/53.)]

No. 143.

Sir Edward Grey to Consul-General Lamb.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 34835/34835/14/53.

Tel. (No. 122.)

Foreign Office, July 30, 1914, 4.50 p.m.

I have informed Powers that H.M.S. "Defence" and the British destroyer now at Durazzo have been authorized to rejoin fleet and that in view of Austrian declaration of war on Serbia and of possibility of complications that may involve

(1) [A copy of this telegram was sent to the Admiralty and to the War Office.]

Montenegro. H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] have decided to withdraw Col[onel] Phillips and the British detachment from Scutari.⁽²⁾

Admiral Troubridge and Col[onel] Phillips are being informed accordingly.⁽³⁾

Conf[idential].

I presume that Austria and Italy will retain sufficient naval strength at Durazzo to protect persons of Prince and of International Commission and their staffs, but in the contrary event you are enjoined to leave Durazzo with your Assistant either on one of the foreign men-of-war or by Italian or Austrian steamer, as may be most convenient or readily available.⁽⁴⁾

⁽²⁾ [*cp. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. XI, p. 196, No. 308.]

⁽³⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 20) to Colonel Phillips of July 30, 1914, D. 2.30 p.m., directed him to hand over his Governorship to the next senior foreign officer. The troops were withdrawn to Malta. (F.O. 34835/34835/14/53.)]

⁽⁴⁾ [*cp. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. XI, p. 313, No. 591.]

CHAPTER LXXXV.

THE ÆGEAN ISLANDS.

[*ED. NOTE.*—The subject of this chapter is treated in *G.P.*, XXXVI (II), pp. 425–594, Chapter 281, and pp. 749–847, Chapter 283; *cp.* also *Imperialismus*, Vols. I–III.]

No. 144.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 37555/13799/13/44.

(No. 507.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 12, 1913.

The French and Italian Ambassadors called to see me this morning,⁽²⁾ and informed me that their Governments both agreed to the following formula respecting the Ægean Islands at present occupied by Italy:—

Lorsque, conformément à la première partie de la déclaration italienne du 5 août,⁽³⁾ l'article 2 du traité de Lausanne aura été intégralement exécuté par les deux parties contractantes, les six Grandes Puissances se prononceront sur l'attribution du Dodécanèse et prendront d'un commun accord entre elles la décision à ce sujet.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet. It was repeated to Rome (No. 205).]

⁽²⁾ [M. Paul Cambon's account of the conversation is given in *D.D.F.*, 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VIII, pp. 25–7, No. 20.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II), p. 954, No. 1202; *cp.* also *ibid.*, pp. 1066–7, *App.* V.]

No. 145.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir R. Rodd.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 37556/13799/13/44.

(No. 206.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 12, 1913.

Yesterday, in the course of conversation with the Italian Ambassador, I pointed out what a difficult situation would arise if the fulfilment of the Treaty of Lausanne was indefinitely delayed by the Turks, and Italy therefore remained indefinitely in occupation of some of the Ægean Islands. I thought that it might become necessary to propose some fixed date by which, if Turkey did not fulfil the Treaty of Lausanne, Italy and the other Powers in consultation should decide the fate of the Islands.

The Ambassador assured me that it was a matter of good faith on the part of Italy to abandon the Islands. He would pledge himself in every possible way that she would do so; and, if she did not, it would be impossible for him to stay in London.

To-day he informed me that he had reported to his Government what I had said about the possibility of fixing a date. He implored me not to press any thing at the moment, but he had impressed upon his Government that, now that an agreement had been come to about southern Albania, they must be under no mistake as to the positive nature of British views with regard to the Ægean Islands. He urged very

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

strongly that I should not say too much in public in my speech this afternoon in the House of Commons.⁽²⁾

I said that something was due to British public opinion, and I must deal with the matter as best I could.

[I am, &c.]
E. G[REY].

⁽²⁾ [*v. Parl. Deb., 5th Ser., (House of Commons), Vol 56, pp. 2285-7. cp. immediately succeeding document, note (2).*]

No. 146.

Sir R. Rodd to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 41973/106/13/44.

(No. 289.)

Sir,

Rome, D. September 8, 1913.

R. September 13, 1913.

I have the honour to report that as the Minister for Foreign Affairs had expressed a desire to see me, and was himself unable to leave Fiume owing to a somewhat severe attack of gout, I motored there this morning and saw His Excellency as well as the President of the Council who is also undergoing a cure.

The Marquis di San Giuliano was apparently under the impression that I was leaving in the course of the next few days for England and had therefore wished to put certain matters before me for personal communication to you. As, however, should leave be granted to me, I had not contemplated leaving Italy for at least another fortnight, I will also place his observations on record.

He said it was once more the question of the islands which preoccupied him. He was ready to repeat for the twentieth time in the most formal manner possible that Italy had no intention of retaining any one of the islands now occupied for herself, neither Rhodes nor Stampalia nor any other. What she had undertaken to do she would abide by.

He hoped and felt you were convinced of the sincerity of the declarations made to you by the Italian Ambassador in London, confirming those which had been made at the Embassy here.

But there was one point on which he felt a certain nervousness. The English mentality was different from the Italian. Englishmen took words at their face value. Italians read subtle intentions and significances into phrases, and he was haunted by the dread of some misapprehension arising which might have the very consequences, which it was his greatest object to avoid, namely to occasion a feeling of irritation between the two nations owing to the excessive susceptibilities of the Italian people. He wished to appeal to me to place his views before you, because I knew what that Italian mentality was, and he thought that in all probability you, accustomed to deal with the simple and direct mind of the English, might not have realised how readily a word, which in itself, and as used by an Englishman, meant no more than its literal signification implied, might become a stumbling block and a cause of offence to the excitable Italian.

I then gathered that he was under the impression that there would be an autumn session of Parliament, in which he apprehended, through a question or owing to the necessity of declaring policy, some official statement might have to be made regarding the islands. On this point I was able to reassure him and explained that Parliament would not meet again before next year.

He then returned to the matter under discussion, and said what he was especially anxious to secure was, that in any public statement which might have to be made, nothing should be said which could possibly be interpreted here as implying pressure

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet. A copy was sent to the Admiralty on September 19, 1913.]

or menace, in regard to the islands. The Italian Government had openly declared their intentions, and any utterance which appeared to suggest doubts as to their loyalty in abiding by them would give serious offence and might compromise the good understanding which it was his special aim to maintain. I must have seen how certain Italian papers had endeavoured to represent that your speech at the close of the session had been intended to convey a sort of warning to Italy.⁽²⁾ The Government had endeavoured to correct public opinion on that point, but the fact that it had been raised showed how very susceptible opinion was in this respect.

He therefore hoped if the subject came up again due consideration would be given to these susceptibilities in making any public announcement and that it might be found sufficient, if in the meantime circumstances had not changed, to say that there was nothing to add to your statement. He had in view of the recent utterances of certain journals advocating a revision of policy in view of subsequent events, discussed with the President of the Council whether anything more should be said here on the subject. But Signor Giolitti had decided that no notice should be taken of these newspaper politicians. No serious importance need in his opinion be attributed to their views and there was no doubt that Signor Giolitti understood the feeling of the country and took his decisions in accordance with his experience. He had stated in the Chamber the intentions of the Government, and was firmly resolved to abide by them.

After I had seen the Minister for Foreign Affairs I paid a visit to the President of the Council. Signor Giolitti was no doubt aware of what his colleague had intended to say to me and himself in the course of conversation introduced the question. He said he was at a loss to understand why it was assumed in certain quarters that Italy contemplated evading her undertakings, and he referred especially to the insistence of the French press in this respect. He had declared his policy once for all in the Chamber when the question had been raised as to what the future of the islands would be. He had then said that Italy had no intention of retaining any of them; the population was entirely Greek, and the last thing he would contemplate would be to give occasion for a current of Hellenic irredentism directed against Italy. He had never gone back and had no intention of going back on what he had then announced. The Treaty of Lausanne had provided for their restitution to Turkey before the Balkan war broke out, before there was any question of the transfer of Ottoman territory to Greece. Circumstances had caused and might continue to cause inevitable delay, but Italy was bound by her treaty obligations.

I was very glad to have received so categorical a statement from Signor Giolitti on the subject, who is a man of his word and one who weighs carefully the significance of any announcement which he makes. So long therefore as he remains in control of public affairs in Italy, whether directly or indirectly, we may I think rest assured that there will be no revision of policy. Other valid reasons have now manifested themselves to explain evident efforts which Italy is making to secure the good will and friendship of Turkey, as in so doing she is not only associating herself with the policy of her German ally, but she hopes to obtain valuable commercial concessions. I am therefore now disposed to think that there is no necessity to connect these efforts with any ambition to secure the permanent retention by a bargain with Turkey of an island as a naval station, a possibility to which I referred in my despatch No. 229 Confidential of the second instant.⁽³⁾ In coming to the above conclusions I do not think that Italian statesmen have adopted this attitude altogether willingly, but they are, I believe, convinced that any other course would meet with strong opposition from

⁽²⁾ [The speech made in the House of Commons on August 12, contained the statement that "the destiny of these Ægean Islands—all of them including those in the temporary possession of Italy—is a matter which concerns all the Great Powers, and must be settled eventually by them and no Great Power is to retain one of these islands for itself." *Parl. Deb., 5th Ser.*, (House of Commons), Vol. 56, p. 2286. *cp.* M. Paul Cambon's comment, *D.D.F.*, 3^{me} *Sér.*, Vol. VIII, pp. 29-31, No. 24.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II), pp. 1000-1, No. 1255.]

Great Britain and France, and they have therefore thought it more prudent to take the initiative in disavowing any intention of doing what they realise would bring them into inevitable conflict with those Powers.

Under these circumstances I submit that it may be politic, in the interests of good relations, to give due consideration to the appeal of the Minister for Foreign Affairs that nothing may be said which could be interpreted here as implying any doubt as to the loyalty of Italian declarations, or as suggesting the exercise of pressure which the susceptibility of Italians might regard as humiliating.

I have, &c.

RENNELL RODD.

MINUTES.

These declarations are categorical enough to allay our fears and those of the French, but I still feel that Italy will delay acting on them on some pretext or other.

If she shows a disposition to act in good faith there will be no necessity for any warnings in Parliament, but if not I do not see why we should undertake to spare her susceptibilities by silence.

H. N.

Sept[ember] 13, 1913.

These assurances will give H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] a stronger position than they have occupied since the adoption of the Italian formula by the ambassadors' conference. That being so, we may well reserve any declaration or remonstrance until the occasion arises, that is until a delay to evacuate becomes a flagrant evasion of the Italian undertaking.

It is a pity that the published declarations of the Italian gov[ernmen]t are not equally explicit as their confidential assurances. According to the official "communiqué" published by them on Sept[ember] 8 (Sec 41972),⁽⁴⁾ Italy claims to have retained "full liberty of action . . . in accordance with the decisions taken at the conference in London."

E. A. (1).

Sept[ember] 15.

E. G.

⁽⁴⁾ [Not reproduced, as the subject of the *communiqué* is sufficiently indicated above. (F.O. 41972/106/13/44.)]

No. 147.

Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Paris, September 9, 1913.

F.O. 41560/106/13/44.

D. 4 P.M.

Tel. (No. 126.) Confidential.

R. 9 P.M.

French Minister for Foreign Affairs spoke to me this morning about the Ægean islands occupied by Italy. He asked whether I had any information as to the intentions of the Italians. I said that I had none, and upon my asking him whether he had, he replied that he had information (which) came from London and Italian newspapers which had the appearance of a desire on the part of the Italian Government to evade withdrawal, and the French consul at Rhodes reported that the proceedings of the Italians there denoted a permanent stay.

French Minister for Foreign Affairs asked what would be your attitude supposing that Italian Government, on the plea of the pressure of public opinion in Italy or on some other pretext, failed to withdraw from the islands. He wished me to enquire.

⁽¹⁾ [Copies of this telegram were sent to the Admiralty; to the Director of Military Operations.]

MINUTES.

The French feel very strongly about this question and will be quite willing to take the initiative. We could back them up and doubtless Russia, whose flirtation with Italy appears to be over, would do the same.

H. N.

I am afraid we are not in a strong position. The ambassadors' conference adopted the following resolution⁽²⁾:—

“Lorsque, conformément à la première partie de la déclaration italienne du 5 août, l'article 2 du Traité de Lausanne aura été intégralement exécuté par les deux parties contractantes, les six Grandes Puissances se prononceront sur l'attribution du Dodécannèse et prendront d'un commun accord entre elles la décision à ce sujet.”

If, for some reason, the Turkish gov[ernmen]t play into Italy's hand by delaying the withdrawal of the remnant of the Turkish forces from Tripoli, the Italians will have a perfectly good legal case if they meanwhile retain the islands. I do not see how in these circumstances we can expect to dislodge them except by the threat, and if necessary the actual use, of force.

The only means that seem otherwise open to us to use pressure would be to work upon the Turks and insist, in the interest of a definite settlement essential to the peace of Europe, that the Turkish officers or troops must be withdrawn at once. But it is very doubtful whether we have the power to drive the Turks into any such action. Failing this there is nothing to do but to wait, unless France and England were to decide to occupy other islands at once and declare their determination not to evacuate them unless and until Italy on her part gives up her islands.

E. A. C.

Sept[ember] 10.

The question is a very complex one. It is fairly clear that Italy will not evacuate all the islands—withstanding previous protestations. We asserted our intention over and over again to evacuate Egypt and have never done so and will not do so. Italy w[oul]d plead force of cir[cumstan]ces, &c., and will remain in Rhodes or one or two other islands. We could not make a casus belli of it.

I think eventually we shall have to recognise the permanent occupation of one or two islands, and it w[oul]d to my mind be well to ascertain carefully from Admir[alt]y on what conditions such recognition could be accorded. As to M. Pichon's direct enquiry we might say we should like to exchange views and ask what his are.⁽³⁾

A. N.

⁽²⁾ [v. *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II), pp. 1066–7, *App. V*; v. also *supra*, p. 130, No. 144, and *note* ⁽³⁾.]

⁽³⁾ [v. immediately succeeding document.]

No. 148.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 41560/106/18/44.

Tel. (No. 332.)

Foreign Office, September 13, 1913, 2.15 p.m.

Your tel[egram] No. 126.⁽²⁾

I do not intend to let the matter drop. I shall take it up with Italian Ambassador, who has given very explicit assurances on the subject, on his return to London, and if no progress is made I shall point out that Italy is apparently by cultivating cordial relations with Turkey while Turkey's engagements as regards Tripoli remain unfulfilled, acquiescing in non-fulfilment of those engagements. This will be in practice collusion between Italy and Turkey to enable former to remain in the Islands.

I must consult Prime Minister and my colleagues when we re-assemble after the holidays as to what our attitude should be if Italy indefinitely prolongs her occupation.⁽³⁾

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Rome (No. 264).]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

⁽³⁾ [Note by Sir Edward Grey: “(I cannot say more than this at the present moment, but there will be trouble if Italy does not evacuate and I will discuss the question with Sir A. Nicolson and Sir E. Crowe when I return to London). E. G.”]

No. 149.

Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 42851/106/18/44.

(No. 468.) Confidential.

Sir,

Paris, D. September 17, 1913.

R. September 19, 1913.

Monsieur Pichon has been absent from Paris and only returned late last night.

I saw His Excellency by appointment this morning⁽²⁾ and informed him that, as he had desired, I had made enquiry of you as to what would be your attitude supposing that the Italian Government on the plea of the pressure of public opinion in Italy or on some other pretext failed to withdraw from the *Ægean Islands*.

I told His Excellency that you had replied (see your telegram No. 332 of September 13th)⁽³⁾ that you did not intend to let the matter drop; that the Italian Ambassador had given very explicit assurances on the subject, and on his return to London, you would revert to the subject, and, if matters had not advanced, you would point out that if, while Turkey had not fulfilled her engagements as regards Tripoli Italy cultivated cordial relations with Turkey and thereby apparently acquiesced in the non-fulfilment of Turkish pledges it would amount to collusion between Italy and Turkey in order to enable Italy to remain in the islands. I further stated to M. Pichon that you would consult with the Prime Minister and the Cabinet after the holidays as to what attitude should be adopted by His Majesty's Government were Italy to prolong indefinitely her occupation of the Islands.

M. Pichon wished me to thank you for the communication which I had made to him with which he expressed himself as quite satisfied. He felt sure he said that if England and France continued their representations and made a firm stand as regards the question, Italy would end by carrying out her engagements to evacuate the Islands.⁽⁴⁾

M. Pichon has no information which would lead him to think that Germany and Austria are encouraging Italy to keep one or more of the Islands.

I have, &c.

FRANCIS BERTIE.

MINUTE.

Since our tel[egram] No. 332⁽³⁾ to Paris the Italian Gov[ernmen]t have again given explicit assurances.⁽⁵⁾

H. N.

Sept[ember] 19, 1913.

R. P. M.

Sept[ember] 19/13.

E. A. C.

Sept[ember] 19.

E. G.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet. A copy was sent to the Admiralty.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. D.D.F.*, 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VIII, pp. 205-6, No. 159.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. immediately preceding document.*]

⁽⁴⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp. 131-3, No. 146.]

⁽⁵⁾ [Mr. Dering's despatch (No. 244), D. September 13, R. September 16, 1913, mentions an official denial of any desire to annex the islands, published by the Stefani Agency in the *Popolo Romano* on the 13th. (F.O. 42447/106/13/44.)]

No. 150.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Elliot.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 44596/39220/13/44.

(No. 118.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 27, 1913.

The King of Greece came to the Foreign Office to-day, and spoke to me with anxiety about Greek relations with Turkey. His whole apprehension of trouble arose

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

from Turkish designs upon the Ægean Islands, especially Mytilene and Chios. There was news that the Turks were preparing an expedition. The trouble arose from the dilatory methods of the Powers, who had undertaken to settle the question of the Islands, and had not done so.

As he seemed desirous to know what prospect there was of the Powers settling the matter, I observed that the latest decision of the Powers had been that the Ægean Islands were to go to Greece, with the exception of Tenedos and Imbros, and also the exception of the islands in the occupation of Italy, as to the final destiny of which the Powers had reserved their decision. I could not say that the Powers were likely to take any active steps in the way of intervention: the Concert of Europe had throughout shown great reluctance to intervene by force in any thing.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

[ED. NOTE.—The King and Queen of Greece were on a visit to England from September 17 to September 30, 1913. The King paid a visit to Paris on September 21, and on his way home. cp. *D.D.F.*, 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VIII, pp. 291-2, No. 228; p. 307, No. 241; pp. 310-1, No. 244.]

No. 151.

Mr. Dering to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 47102/47102/13/44.

Rome, D. October 15, 1913, 8.50 P.M.

Tel. (No. 178.)

R. October 16, 1913, 8 A.M.

My immediately preceding telegram.⁽¹⁾

Indirectly when speaking of Italian projects at Adalia (group omitted: M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs]) alluded in half-apologetic manner to fact that Italy, like Germany, was a new nation and had come late into the field of spheres of influence in (group omitted: ? countries) bordering on Mediterranean. He likened her to unexpected guest at dinner for whom space must perforce be made and said that I should quite realize her legitimate desire for expansion of her commercial interests. It was Italy's desire to maintain territorial status quo in Asia Minor which he hoped would not be disturbed. He then referred to conversations which had been almost on the point of beginning both here with Sir R. Rodd and in London with the Italian Ambassador with regard to mutual understanding between the two (gr[ou]p omitted: ? countries) on Mediterranean questions.⁽²⁾ These conversations it was true had not got far because so many urgent events had cropped up for instance in the Balkans which had required immediate attention, but he was inclined to think that there was no reason now why they should not soon be renewed. I said I would report his remarks to you. I gathered from H[is] E[xc]ellency's manner that he is ? very desirous that there should be no question which could in any way cause friction between Great Britain and Italy in Mediterranean, and could not but feel that he might be paving the way for these conversations in order to see if he could not get us to alter our attitude about Rhodes and Stampalia. If this supposition were in any way well founded it might be well to encourage H[is] E[xc]ellency to speak out and let us see what is at back of his mind.

MINUTES.

I should have thought Italy, by her seizure of Tripoli, had done pretty well for herself as regards "countries bordering on the Mediterranean." Western Dep[artmen]t as to Mediterranean understanding with Italy.⁽²⁾

Mr. Vansittart as to islands.

⁽¹⁾ [Mr. Dering's telegram (No. 177) of October 15, 1913, D 8.15 P.M., R. 10.30 P.M., refers to Italian Railway projects at Adalia. Mr. Dering was assured that the Italian project would not encroach on any concessions in the region, and that, if it did, it would be modified to suit all parties. (F.O. 46976/39484/13/44.)]

⁽²⁾ [This subject will be treated in *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. X (II).]

If room has to be made for Italy in regard to railway enterprise in Asiatic Turkey it can hardly be expected that this should be done at the expense of the only remaining British railway in Turkey.

A. P

Oct[ober] 16, 1913.

The Italians have given us the most categorical assurances about the islands. It w[oul]d be rash to believe them. It is most important that the Italians sh[oul]d not keep Stampalia. If the Italians have the *arrière pensée* that seems probable, it w[oul]d certainly be well if we c[oul]d find it out for certain.

R. G. V.

Oct[ober] 16.

The position as to the proposed "North African" agreement is that Sir R. Rodd was told in February last that if the Italian M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] raised the question again he might tentatively put forward the draft formula we have drawn up. (See print section in 1487/13.)⁽³⁾ The Italians have never referred to the subject again until now, but we feared in March that if they were pressed on the subject then, they might wish to mix the question of the Ægean Islands with it and perhaps that of the coast of Asia Minor (see 11261/13.)⁽⁴⁾ It appears that they are still likely to try to do so and we must be careful to keep the two questions separate.

D.

16.x.13.

It is fairly clear that the Italians wish to mix up the questions of the North African agreement and the Ægean Islands so as to make their consent to the former conditional on a modification of our attitude on the latter or in regard to the Adalian project. It should, I think, be made quite clear that we consider the North African agreement question one that stands quite by itself and that, though we are at any time ready to discuss it, we shall do so quite independently of any other subject.

I venture to add that when Sir R. Rodd mooted the idea in April, 1912,⁽⁵⁾ it was under the shadow of the renewal of the Triple Alliance and its possible extension to the Mediterranean. Since then the Alliance has been renewed and not extended,⁽⁶⁾ and the conclusion of a North African agreement has therefore lost much of its first importance for us. *See minutes on 46976.*

G. R. C.

16 10.13.

The agreement never had any real value for us and we should be making a very bad bargain if we were to make any concessions on any point merely in order to get such an agreement, which, if concluded at all, should be concluded on its own merits.

I am doubtful as to the wisdom of encouraging Italy to put forward any suggestions for an Italian acquisition of Ægean islands. We are in a strong position in holding Italy to the letter and spirit of her most solemn assurances. If we once allow her to discuss with us the possibility of her disregarding those assurances, our position would perhaps be weakened.

E. A. C.

Oct[ober] 16.

As far as I recollect the idea of a Mediterranean agreement with Italy was on our part that we should promise not to disturb Italy in Tripoli. Secure possession of Tripoli for Italy was to be the basis. We wanted her to be content with that. Apparently she now wishes to continue the discussion on the basis that besides Tripoli she should get something in the Islands and in Asia Minor. We cannot encourage that. We need not oppose anything in Asia Minor that does not conflict with the rights of the Smyrna-Aidin R[ailwa]y but we must oppose Italian projects in the Islands.

E. G.

⁽³⁾ [Sir R. Rodd's despatch (No. 3, Confidential) of January 4, 1913, comments on the draft formula sent to him in Sir Edward Grey's despatch (No. 285) of December 20, 1912. (F.O. 51092/18308/12/22. 1487/1487/13/22.)]

⁽⁴⁾ [The reference is to Sir Edward Grey's despatch (No. 174, Secret) to Sir F. Bertie, of March 5, 1913, in which he said it would "be better for us to leave the matter as it was for the present." (F.O. 11261/1487/13/22.)]

⁽⁵⁾ [Sir R. Rodd sent a private letter to Sir Edward Grey on April 13, 1912, dealing with the question of a possible understanding with Italy in North Africa. (F.O. 18308/18308/12/22.)]

⁽⁶⁾ [*cp. Pribram, Vol. I, pp. 244-59.*]

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 47401/47102/13/44.

(No. 629.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 22, 1913.

The French Chargé d'Affaires informed Sir E. Crowe on the 17th October that the Italian government were showing signs of great eagerness to arrive at some general understanding with France respecting a common policy in the Mediterranean.⁽²⁾ He referred to what had recently passed between Monsieur Paléologue and the Italian Chargé d'Affaires at Paris, as reported in your despatch No. 489 of the 1st instant.⁽³⁾ Since then a further communication from the Italian government had been received to the effect that they were most anxious for a friendly arrangement, similar to that which had settled the lines of Franco-Italian policy in North Africa, and that they expected soon to receive the proposals which France would no doubt wish to make.

M. de Fleuriau said he was instructed to bring this to my notice, as France wished in this matter to proceed in the closest co-operation with England.

Sir E. Crowe thanked M. de Fleuriau and said we had just received a telegram from Rome conveying a message from the Marquis di San Giuliano to a similar effect as regards an Anglo-Italian understanding,⁽⁴⁾ and that he felt certain it would continue to be my wish that France and England should remain in touch in respect to this question. Sir E. Crowe then asked M. de Fleuriau whether, in the opinion of the French government, the present move of Italy was connected with her plans and ambitions in regard to the islands. M. de Fleuriau said this was undoubted, and proceeded to tell Sir E. Crowe the following :

There had been much talk and speculation in diplomatic circles at Constantinople of late as to the lines on which a settlement of the question of the islands could be effected. A plan had been mooted by which the Powers would allow Turkey to retain Chios and Mitylene in return for her agreeing to transfer to Greece all her rights to and in the islands now in Italian occupation. The French embassy had sounded the Italian Representative as to how such a plan would be regarded by the Italian Government. The reply had been that it was quite unacceptable, and the impression created by what the Italian Representative had said was that Italy wished Chios, Mitylene and all the islands now occupied by her to be assigned to Turkey from whom Italy would, in return for bringing about such a solution, expect to obtain some recognition, taking the form of concessions etc., of Italian special interests not only in the islands but on the mainland opposite to them. In fact, Italy's plan seemed to be to carve out a large sphere of influence, with claim to ultimate possession, in respect to those important Turkish provinces.

Sir E. Crowe told M. de Fleuriau that the existence of some such scheme in Italy's mind was attested to some extent by her efforts to obtain an important railway concession for connecting Adalia with the interior. Sir E. Crowe said we were very grateful to him for having given us the first information concerning this railway project, which had enabled us to put in effective protests at Constantinople and Rome. Sir E. Crowe also informed M. de Fleuriau that the Italian government now seemed anxious to connect a friendly arrangement respecting this concession with the proposed general understanding relation of Anglo-Italian policy in the Mediterranean, but that it seemed to him, Sir E. Crowe, altogether undesirable to mix these things up together.

(1) [This despatch is based on Sir E. Crowe's record of his conversation with M. de Fleuriau on October 17.]

(2) [*cp. D.D.F.*, 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VIII, p. 478, No. 377, and note (1).]

(3) [Sir F. Bertie's despatch (No. 489), D. October 1, R. October 2, 1913, is not reproduced. It referred also to M. Poincaré's recent visit to Spain. (F.O. 44812/42850/13/17.) *cp. D.D.F.*, 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VIII, p. 287, No. 223.]

(4) [*v. immediately preceding document.*]

Otherwise it would become easy for the Italian government, by taking credit for withdrawing from a railway scheme which infringed prior British rights, to claim, in return for such a manifestation of good-will, a recognition of Italian claims of a more or less exclusive character to other regions in Asia Minor.

Monsieur de Fleury expressed concurrence in this view.

[I am, &c.]
E. G[REY].

No. 153.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Dering.(¹)

F.O. 47873/106/13/44.

(No. 260.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 29, 1913.

The Italian Chargé d'Affaires put to Sir E. Crowe on the 14th October the two following questions, to which he said he was instructed to ask for my answers;—

(1) Does the British government consider that the question of the islands has been definitely settled, so far as the Six Powers are concerned, by the Ambassadors' Conference, and in what sense?

(2) What would be the attitude of the British government if Turkey should succeed in recovering some of the islands at present occupied by Greece.

Sir E. Crowe said that as these questions raised somewhat grave issues, he could not be expected himself to answer them off hand, and that all he could do was to refer them to me.

In the course of some informal conversation on the subject, Sir E. Crowe observed that the Italian government were in as good a position as the British government to say what was decided by the Ambassadors' Conference. Sir E. Crowe's own impression, he said, was that the views of the Conference on the question of the islands were nowhere recorded in a precise and definite formula solemnly adopted and approved by the six governments, except to the extent that the belligerents devolved upon the 6 Powers, and the 6 Powers formally assumed, authority to decide the ultimate fate of all the islands. Nor was there, Sir E. Crowe thought, any doubt, that all the Powers had accepted the solution of letting all the islands, except two or three specified (Tenedos, Imbros, Thasos) go to Greece, under certain reservations, made separately by several of the governments. Whilst Sir E. Crowe believed that all these various reservations were practically disposed of and allowed to be made good in the course of the further debates, the final result was not explicitly summarized or restated in concise form. So far as Great Britain was concerned, I had made it abundantly clear that she considered the transfer of all the islands (with the few exceptions mentioned) to Greece as the only real solution; and when the southern frontier of Albania was considered and the question arose of fixing a line which would involve the abandonment by Greece of Koritza and a large belt of northern Epirus, I had explicitly stated that if I agreed to call upon Greece to make this sacrifice, it was on the understanding that she would be compensated by receiving the islands.

As regards Prince Borghese's second question, Sir E. Crowe said that the latest indications of Turkish policy made it appear improbable that any attempt would be made now to wrench the islands from Greece. In these circumstances it might well appear to me unnecessary to define precisely the attitude of the British government in a contingency which had not arisen, which was not expected just now to arise, and

(¹) [This despatch is based on Sir E. Crowe's record of his conversation with Prince Borghese. The changes made when the record was transformed into a despatch are of a very unimportant character. The marginal comments appear on the original record.]

which, if it arose, would be likely to do so in circumstances that could not, at present, be accurately foreseen.

Prince Borghese finally referred to the islands in Italian occupation. He had on several occasions lately received instructions to repeat to us the assurances already given by his government in various forms, that Italy would adhere to her solemn pledges. He had not acted on these instructions, and had explained to the Marquis di San Giuliano that in his opinion there was no need to repeat those assurances as he felt sure the British government did not belong to those who doubted the good faith and honour of the Italian government in this matter.

Sir E. Crowe said that I had made it quite clear in my speech in the House of Commons⁽²⁾ that H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] have full confidence in the loyal attitude of Italy and in the faith of her plighted word. Since then we had made several communications to the Italian government through our Embassy at Rome, breathing the same spirit of absolute confidence, and I understood from the Marquis di San Giuliano's answers to those communications that this attitude of the British gov[ernment] was appreciated.

Prince Borghese in thanking Sir E. Crowe for telling him of the latest of our communications at Rome, said this confirmed him in the impression that there was no need for him to give effect to his instructions on this point. He said he had only mentioned the matter to me on account of the constant reference to alleged Italian designs in the press, including the "Times."⁽³⁾

Sir E. Crowe observed that if the Italian gov[ernment] were anxious to put an end to all newspaper talk of this kind, they might do well to stop the mouth of their own rather indiscreet officials, and he referred to the extraordinary speech reported recently to have been made in the island of Rhodes by General Ameglio.⁽⁴⁾ It was utterances of this kind which fed the suspicions of journalists and of a sceptical public.

Prince Borghese admitted that these "terrible generals" did a lot of mischief.⁽⁵⁾

[I am, &c.

E. GREY.]

⁽²⁾ [v. *Parl. Deb.*, 5th Ser., (House of Commons), Vol. 56, pp. 2281-310.]

⁽³⁾ [v. *The Times*, October 14, 1913, p. 7.]

⁽⁴⁾ [Marginal comment by Sir Edward Grey: "An opportune and wholesome reference." [E. G.].]

⁽⁵⁾ [There is a note by Sir Edward Grey at the end of Sir E. Crowe's record: "Sir E. Crowe should see a letter I wrote to Sir A. Nicolson last week defining my personal view of how the Powers stood as regards the Islands occupied by Greece. It agrees substantially with what Sir E. Crowe said. E. G." The reference is to a letter of October 7, 1913. *Carnock MSS.*, Vol. IX of 1913.]

No. 154.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Dering.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 48214/106/13/44.

(No. 262.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 29, 1913.

With reference to my despatch No. 260 of to-day's date,⁽²⁾ Sir E. Crowe, by my instructions, gave the Italian Chargé d'Affaires on the 20th October the following reply to the two questions which he had propounded on the 14th instant:—

(1) The view of the British government as to the decision taken by the Ambassadors' Conference respecting the islands is that when it was agreed to assign Koritza and neighbouring districts to Albania, this was on the distinct understanding

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is based on Sir E. Crowe's record of his conversation with Prince Borghese. The slight alterations made when Sir E. Crowe's minute was transformed into a despatch in no way affect the sense of the document. M. de Fleuriau gave an account of the conversation in his despatch to M. Pichon of October 24, 1913 *D.D.F.*, 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VIII, pp. 478-80, No. 377.]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

that all the islands except Imbros and Tenedos (and Thasos) would go to Greece. If any attempt was now to be made to modify this settlement so far as the islands were concerned, it would be open to any of the six Powers to demand the reopening and reconsideration of their decision as regards the Southern Albanian frontier.⁽³⁾

(2) If the contingency, not at present probable, should arise of Turkey re-occupying by force the islands of Chios and Mitylene, the British government would expect all the six Powers to deliberate and determine in common what action should be taken.

Sir E. Crowe also made clear to Prince Borghese that on point (1) the understanding was of course only *inter se* between the Powers. They never communicated any formal resolution to Greece or Turkey, or to anyone, so that it is only as between the Powers that any understanding exists.

[I am, &c.
E. GREY.]

(3) [*cp. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II), p. 825, No. 1019; pp. 943-4, No. 1187; pp. 945-6, No. 1190; p. 948, No. 1193; pp. 949-50, No. 1195; pp. 954-6, No. 1202; pp. 1066-7, *App. V.*]

No. 155.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 50190/106/13/44.
(No. 665.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 31, 1913.

In speaking to M. Cambon to-day I again asked him to ascertain M. Pichon's view as to what we should do if the Commissions in Albania came to a deadlock and broke down.⁽²⁾

I indicated a preference for withdrawal on our part as we had little interest politically in Albania, but I impressed upon M. Cambon that we felt very differently about the Ægean Islands. The Admiralty held a very strong opinion that none of these islands must go to a Great Power; it had not yet been necessary for us to discuss what steps we should take if there was real difficulty about the Islands, but M. Pichon must not suppose that because we felt little interest in Albania we should disinterest ourselves as regards the Islands.

M. Cambon said for France the question of the Islands was one of great interest.

[I am, &c.]
E. G[REY].

(1) [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

(2) [*cp. supra*, p. 50, No. 58, and *note* (2); *cp. also D.D.F.*, 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VIII, pp. 523-4, No. 417.]

No. 156.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Dering.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 50656/106/13/44.
(No. 268.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, November 4, 1913.

I asked the Italian Ambassador to-day, on his return to London, about the Ægean Islands.

He said that, while he had been away, I had no doubt heard what had been said to Sir Rennell Rodd.

(1) [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

I replied that the most explicit pledges had been reported to me from the British Embassy in Rome.⁽²⁾

The Ambassador said that there was no doubt about the fulfilment of these pledges, but the Turks had not fulfilled their obligations under the Treaty of Lausanne: they had even sent fresh Officers to Tripoli. If the Italians gave back the Islands, the pledge that they held for the fulfilment of these obligations, and the surrender of the Islands was followed by some Turkish action in Tripoli, the position of the Italian Government would be quite untenable, and rightly so.

I remarked that Italy was on very good terms with Turkey, and that, so long as Turkey found that she could be on good terms with Italy without fulfilling her engagements under the Treaty of Lausanne, she was not likely to fulfil them.

The Ambassador said that the real thing that influenced Turkey was the fear that, when the Islands had been restored to her, the Powers might take them away from her and hand them over to Greece. As soon as Turkey was sure that she would retain the Islands, she would no doubt hasten to fulfil the engagements of the Treaty of Lausanne, for she would not wish Italy to remain in occupation of the Islands. There would be a strong sentiment in Italy against giving up the Islands when the time came, but this would be much allayed if the restoration could coincide with some economic concession to Italy in Asia Minor.

I said that it would not do for the question to drag on indefinitely.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

(²) [*v. supra*, pp. 131-3, No. 146; p. 135, No. 149, and *note* (⁵).]

No. 157.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 49995/47102/13/44.

(No. 668.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, November 5, 1913.

M. de Fleuriau called on the 1st November to tell Sir A. Nicolson that according to recent information which his Ministry had received the Italian Gov[ernmen]t were in active negotiations with Berlin as to the recognition of certain spheres of influence in Asia Minor and as to Italy being permitted to retain one or two of the islands at present in her possession. Berlin would probably be not unfavourable to such an arrangement. The French Gov[ernmen]t were fairly sure that when the Triple Alliance was renewed a naval agreement was also concluded and that an article was inserted regarding policy in Eastern Europe.⁽²⁾

The Italians in their conversations at Paris, informal and preparatory conversations, regarding a possible Mediterranean agreement have not mentioned the question of the islands though they have touched upon the question of Asia Minor.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY]

(¹) [This despatch is based on Sir A. Nicolson's record of his conversation with M. de Fleuriau. There is a report to M. Pichon of this date in *D.D.F.*, 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VIII, pp. 533-4, No. 423, but it refers to Albania.]

(²) [For the text of the Treaty of December 5, 1912, *v. Pribram*, Vol. I, pp. 244-59.]

Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 50499/106/13/44.

(No. 545.) Secret.

Sir,

Paris, D. November 6, 1913.

R. November 7, 1913.

Monsieur Pichon was in a pessimistic mood to-day. His conversation was to the effect that Turkey is prepared to go to extremes with Greece and that Bulgaria will join with Turkey against Greece, that Austria and Italy are very aggressively inclined against Greece and Servia; that Italy is more committed than ever to the Triple Alliance as interpreted by Germany.⁽²⁾

His Excellency expressed great distrust of Italian policy. According to information which he has received and which he regards as trustworthy, the Marquis de [*sic* :] San Giuliano stated recently to an Austrian agent that the Italian Government would not relinquish Rhodes.

Monsieur Pichon has instructed Monsieur Cambon to confer with you on the general situation. He thinks that the only thing that will exercise an effectual control over the Italian Government is fear of the British Navy. They might risk the displeasure of France in the question of the Ægean islands, as they might rely on the support of Germany against France, but they could not hope for German assistance if England asserted herself in a Mediterranean question.

I assured Monsieur Pichon as I had frequently done before that on the question of the Ægean islands he might confidently rely on your support. It was an essential principle of British policy that no Great Power should alter the status quo in the Mediterranean by the occupation of an island in the Ægean Sea. You would therefore hold the Italian Government to their engagement not to retain any such island.

Monsieur Pichon said that he had always had full confidence in the assurances which you had given to him that you would support the French Government in representations to the Italian Government, and that you had recently informed Monsieur Cambon that you intended to again speak strongly to the Italian Ambassador on the subject of the Islands.⁽³⁾

I have, &c.

FRANCIS BERTIE.

MINUTES.

An opportunity of reopening the question may arise if and when Italy again wishes the Powers to put pressure on Greece to evacuate Koritza and the Southern Albanian borderlands. We should then be in a position to reply that when those districts were assigned by the Ambassadors' Conference to Albania,⁽⁴⁾ it was on the understanding that *all* the islands would be given to Greece; and we could point out the injustice of insisting on one side of a bargain whilst ignoring the counter-obligation.

E. A. C.

Nov[ember] 8.

A. N.

E. G.

? Was this so? I thought the understanding was limited to the islands in Greek occupation.

A. N.

As far as I remember we can fairly contend only that it was the islands in Greek occupation.

E. G.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp.* M. Pichon's telegram of this date to M. Paul Cambon, *D.D.F.*, 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VIII, p. 558, No. 444.]

⁽³⁾ [A conversation between Sir Edward Grey and M. Paul Cambon on October 31 is recorded in *D.D.F.*, 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VIII, pp. 523-4, No. 417.]

⁽⁴⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp. 140-1, No. 154, and *note* (3).]

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Dering.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 51254/106/13/44.

(No. 276.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, November 7, 1913.

The Italian Ambassador said to-day that he had observed a reference that I had made in Newcastle yesterday to the speech that the Prime Minister was to make in the Guildhall on the 10th of this month.⁽²⁾ He therefore took upon himself personally to urge that the Prime Minister should not introduce the question of the Ægean Islands in Italian occupation. Italy had given her pledges, and would fulfil them. We were not the only Power who was interested in the fulfilment of Italy's pledges about the islands, and there was no reason why we should, by a reiteration of our view in public, draw upon ourselves the sole responsibility for pressing Italy in the matter. He hoped that I would not mind his putting this to me personally. It was really impossible for the Italian Government to evacuate the islands till Turkey had fulfilled the conditions of the Treaty of Lausanne.

I again pointed out that Italy was very good friends with Turkey and that, as long as Turkey found that she could have Italian friendship without fulfilling the conditions of the Treaty of Lausanne, she was not likely to fulfil them.

The Ambassador reiterated that, when Turkey was sure that she would keep the islands, she would be only too ready to hasten the Italian evacuation.

In pressing the point that the Prime Minister should not bring the question of the islands into his Guildhall speech, the Ambassador reminded me that, when we had given pledges that we would go out of Egypt, and other Powers, France especially, were pressing us about them, Italy alone had never bothered us in the matter.

I said that our experience in Egypt had been that the longer one stayed in a place the more difficult it was to get out of it, and that was why I did not wish the same thing to occur elsewhere.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the Prime Minister.]

⁽²⁾ [The freedom of the City of Newcastle was conferred on Sir Edward Grey on November 6. *v. The Times*, November 7, 1913, p. 6. For Mr. Asquith's speech at the Guildhall, *v. ibid.*, November 11, 1913, p. 10.]

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 53081/106/13/44.

(No. 937.) Confidential.

Constantinople, D. November 15, 1913.

Sir:—

R. November 24, 1913.

I have the honour to report that I had some conversation this evening with Monsieur Také Jonesco who is paying a short visit to this capital on his return to Bucharest.

After congratulating him on the success which had attached to his efforts in the cause of peace, I enquired whether, in his opinion, it was likely to be durable and whether he had any conversation with Monsieur Venizelos on the subject of the islands.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King. A copy was sent to the Admiralty.]

Monsieur Také Jonesco was disposed—perhaps not unnaturally, to take a hopeful view of the question. He said that he had not touched officially upon the question of the islands because it was too big a question for Roumania to settle but he had discussed the question privately with Monsieur Venizelos and other leading men and he was under the impression that the Greek Government would accept a solution which was unanimously recommended by the Powers—if the decision was not delayed.

The Greek people were in a very good temper at the present moment on account of the demobilisation orders and would be more likely to accept a compromise now than later on, when life had returned to its normal course and the results of the war began to make themselves felt. The same arguments applied to the South Albanian frontier.

I then asked Monsieur Také Jonesco to tell me quite privately what his own opinion was as to the sort of settlement which might be arrived at and he replied that the Greek Government would probably accept the cession to Turkey of Tenedos and Imbros. I said that this would, so far as I had been able to gather, by no means satisfy the Turkish Government. The Grand Vizier had volunteered to me in the most uncompromising language that the Ottoman Government would never under any circumstances consent to the permanent cession of Mitylene and Chios—the possession of those islands was a matter of life and death to the Turkish Empire, and if necessary they would achieve their reconquest by force.⁽²⁾ Monsieur Také Jonesco replied that the Greek Government might perhaps consent to compromise and leave one of those islands to Turkey under certain guarantees, that he was aware of the strength of feeling in this country in regard to the islands but he still thought that an arrangement might be come to without a resort to force—possibly the Greek Government might consent to leave either Mitylene or Chios to Turkey, under certain guarantees. We were interrupted at this moment and I did not pursue the conversation.

I have, &c.

LOUIS MALLET.

⁽²⁾ [*cp. infra*, p. 157, No. 173.]

No. 161.

Mr. Dering to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 58044/52046/13/44.

Tel. (No. 208.) Very Confidential.

Rome, November 22, 1913.

My telegram No. 205 of 21st November: *Ægean islands.*⁽²⁾

Turkish Ambassador, referring yesterday to the contradiction published here of rumour as to loan on guarantee of islands, told me there was not a word of truth in the report, and that Turkey was most anxious to regain possession of the islands as soon as possible.

I asked him when the last Turkish troops would be withdrawn from Cyrenaica in order to bring this about. He replied that there were only forty soldiers there now left by Faik Bey in the hands of Senoussi. He told me confidentially that he had been instructed to ask the Italian Government to send an expedition to rescue them, but had replied to his Government that it was no use suggesting it, as it would mean a

⁽¹⁾ [The text given above is taken from the *Confidential Print*, as the original decypher cannot be traced.]

⁽²⁾ [Mr. Dering's telegram (No. 205) of November 21, 1913, contained the text of an official notice which had appeared in the Italian Press on November 21. It ran as follows:—

“Announcement published by a Russian newspaper of a loan to be made by Italy to Turkey on the guarantee of the possession of Rhodes and Stampalia is entirely without foundation.” (F.O. 52898/52046/13/44.)]

loss of men to the Italians and probably the Turkish soldiers would be exterminated by the Senoussi before they could be reached.

Minister for Foreign Affairs here had given him assurances over and over again of Italy's intention to return the islands to Turkey; only a few days ago the Italian Ambassador at Constantinople had repeated the same assurances to the Grand Vizier, and the Turkish Chargé d'Affaires at Vienna had also reported that he had likewise been assured by his Italian colleague. To himself the Italian Prime Minister had said that Italy would restore the islands to Turkey if the Great Powers made no objection. This reservation seemed to him a little significant, but could be accounted for by the fear entertained by the Italian Government which, he could tell me in strict confidence, had been expressed to him (Minister for Foreign Affairs) that France, England, and Russia meant to give the islands in Italian occupation to Greece. Minister for Foreign Affairs did not distrust British loyalty, and had often spoken in the highest terms of your policy, but he did distrust the French Government on this point. The Ambassador added that the Ottoman Government would never allow these islands to be handed over to Greece.

I replied that the Prime Minister's reservation appeared to me clearly to refer to the fact that the question of the islands was expressly reserved by the Conference of London for settlement by the Great Powers, and that I considered personally that the apprehensions of the Minister for Foreign Affairs were wholly unfounded. No doubt the Greek Government would desire to acquire the islands, but that the desire need not lead to fulfilment. Referring again to the loan, the Ambassador said that Italy desired to join in the loan to Turkey now in contemplation to extent of a fixed sum. I forget the amount he stated, but will ask him again when I call to-day, which will be at his request. But he added that Italy really has no money to lend, for she needs all she has at home, and he did not believe she would be able to participate to the amount for which she had asked as her share.

I asked again at once if this part of the loan was on the security of the islands held by Italy, and the Ambassador replied certainly not.

MINUTES.

I do not know on what authority Mr. Dering made the rather embarrassing statement referred to. Even if H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] were to be eventually compelled to relinquish the plan of securing the islands for Greece, it cannot be judicious to say so at this moment, still less to disavow any such intention.

The whole question of the islands is becoming acute. France is displaying much nervousness on the subject, and our Admiralty are equally apprehensive. The moment does seem to have come for speaking seriously to the Italians. But before doing so H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] will no doubt consider it wise to come to a definite conclusion as to what they are prepared to accept and what not, as also how they will endeavour to effect their purposes.

E. A. C.

Nov[ember] 22.

I told M. Cambon on Wednesday that I would discuss the question of the Islands with the Prime Minister.

Mr. Dering ought not to have expressed an opinion about the ultimate destination of the Islands: there are no instructions that warrant what he said and this should be pointed out to him.⁽³⁾

Bring up on Monday.

E. G.

23.11.13.

⁽³⁾ [A telegram (No. 356) to this effect was sent to Mr. Dering on November 25, D. 12.45 P.M. (F.O. 53044/52046/13/44.)]

· *Mr. Dering to Sir Edward Grey.*⁽¹⁾

F.O. 58940/106/13/44.

(No. 926.) Very Confidential.

Sir :—

Rome, D. November 23, 1913.

R. November 29, 1913.

The polemics in the French and Italian press, to which His Majesty's Ambassador at Paris has alluded in a recent despatch,⁽²⁾ now show some signs of abating in Italy. Ever since the French press comments on the action taken at Athens by the Italian and Austro-Hungarian Governments alone in regard to Greek interference with the work of the International Frontier Commission in Southern Albania, the tone of the Italian newspapers has been almost hostile. The real reason for this I believe to be the conviction which has become common throughout Italy that France is supporting Greek pretensions and aspirations, not only on the Albanian frontier but also in connection with the Ægean islands. There have been many indications of late which lead me to infer that the Italian Government share this opinion, which may be the reason why no steps have been taken to induce the Italian press to moderate their attitude towards France. However, the Italian press appear to have exhausted for the moment their stock of sarcastic and acrimonious remarks, and it may be that the battle has ended for want of fresh ammunition. The fact remains that Greece⁽³⁾ is not popular in this country at present.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs is certainly apprehensive of the rôle which Greece is likely to play in the Eastern Mediterranean in the event of her becoming the permanent mistress of at all events those islands of the Ægean which she at present occupies. The questions recently addressed to you on his behalf by Marquis Imperiali on the subject of those islands would alone prove as much. Marquis di San Giuliano has told me in plain language that he mistrusts the French Government and their policy with regard to Greece, and to the Turkish Ambassador he has been still more frank, saying that a strong naval Power such as Greece was liable to become in the Ægean, would be a danger to Italy, seeing that in the event of a conflict between the two great European groups of Powers, all her support would be naturally attracted to France and the Triple Entente. Marquis di San Giuliano has even intimated his fear to the Turkish Ambassador that, should Italy hand over to Turkey at the present juncture Rhodes and the other islands occupied by her troops, France, supported by Russia, possibly by Great Britain, and even by Germany, of whose attitude as regards Greek aspirations he does not feel quite sure, might make a strong effort to secure their surrender to Greece. This, I gathered from Naby Bey, would be bitterly opposed by Italy and naturally likewise by Turkey.

As you remarked on November 7 to Marquis Imperiali, the longer one stays in a place the more difficult it becomes to get out of it.⁽⁴⁾ It is true that there is not only in military and naval circles here, but also among Senators and Deputies, an intense longing to possess Rhodes, at least, of the islands, and that the idea of "*Rodi italiana*" is already strongly rooted. It is also a fact that the Italian Government have gone no further towards evacuation of the islands than to give repeated assurances all round, including many to the Turkish Ambassador here, that it is their intention to do so. Naby Bey has pointed out to the Minister for Foreign Affairs that only forty Turkish regulars remain in Cyrenaica, that these are held prisoners by the Senoussi and are incapacitated from leaving the country, and that in order to comply with the provisions of the Lausanne Treaty the Ottoman Government have struck these men off the roll of the Turkish army. If this is correct, there are no longer, as I have suspected

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Prime Minister.]

⁽²⁾ [Sir F. Bertie's despatch (No. 558), D. November 14, R. November 15, 1913, enclosed extracts from the French press commenting on the hostile attitude of the Italian press. (F.O. 51845/51845/13/17.)]

⁽³⁾ [Unsigned marginal comment: " ? France."]

⁽⁴⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 144, No. 159.]

for some time, any Turkish soldiers left in Cyrenaica, although the Italian Government may argue that the forty men unable to get away are technically still Turkish soldiers. I have not gathered, though, that they do argue thus: on the contrary, Naby Bey was quite recently assured by the Minister for Foreign Affairs "pour la millième fois" that Italy meant to surrender the islands to Turkey, and expressed to me his conviction that Italy would do so very shortly, but is only hindered by the fear that they might then be adjudged to Greece.

Discussing Italian policy towards Turkey, Naby Bey intimated to me that it was inclined to be Machiavellian. Perhaps with a view to obtaining valuable concessions in Asia Minor, perhaps in order to obtain Turkish active support against Greece, Marquis di San Giuliano had recently made the most, in course of conversation with him, of the services rendered by friendly Italy to Turkey. These services, the Ambassador observed to me smiling, did not really amount to a row of pins. For instance he had been asked to believe that Italy even had a hand in obtaining the retrocession of Adrianople to Turkey, which, said Naby Bey, was most certainly an exaggeration. It was interesting to observe throughout the Ambassador's remarks the oriental tendency to pit one group of European Powers against the other, to the probable benefit of his own country. He professed himself keenly anxious to secure the surrender to Turkey of Rhodes and the other islands, and I think he is sincere.

Still I feel it my duty to mention the idea which occurs to me that, rather than contemplate the possibility of Marquis di San Giuliano's fears becoming realized and see those islands in the possession of Greece, Turkey might even prefer to see them retained by a friendly Power for at least some time longer and might be induced to suggest this to Italy if she saw any signs of a proposal of this kind. Or Turkey might, on receiving back the islands, ask for or be offered Italy's guarantee for support in the event of a Greek attack on the islands or any attempt to dispossess her. At present, however, if Naby Bey is to be believed as to his continued representations to the Italian Government, there appears to be no question of any such intention on the part of the Ottoman Government.

To revert to the Franco-Italian press polemics, I have to report that last Friday Signor Luzzati, a staunch friend to France, published two vigorous articles in the Milanese "Corriere della Sera" and the Roman "Italie," strongly advocating a return to reason. He pointed out that there were no real grounds for France and Italy to disagree; that Germany and Austria-Hungary did not hesitate to cultivate friendly relations and carry on negotiations with the Powers of the Triple Entente, while still preserving their loyalty to the Triple Alliance. Why then should not Italy do likewise? He urged the advantage to Italy of a frank understanding with Great Britain and France in the interests of the new Libyan colonies, and declared that the alleged difference of interests between France and Italy was not real and would be heard of no more when the press of both countries had allowed their better sense to prevail. No English or Russian newspapers had attacked Italy on subjects connected with Greece, which interested both these countries as much as France. He ended his extremely dignified exhortation by warning the Italian and French Governments of the grave responsibility which they would be assuming in permitting press acerbities to continue, tending to separate two countries which ought to be co-operating. Europe requires peace, he added, and will have it at any price.

Signor Luzzati's pen is powerful in Italy just now, while he is known in France as a friend, so it is not unlikely that the modification of tone to which I alluded at the beginning of this despatch may also be due in some measure to the publication of his signed articles.

I have, &c.

HERBERT G. DERING.

MINUTES.

It would be possible now to say to the Italians that we learn the Turkish Gov[ernmen]t has withdrawn all its forces from Tripoli; that only 40 Turkish soldiers remain in Cyrenaica, who are actually prisoners in the hands of the Senoussi, and for whom accordingly the Porte

cannot be held responsible, especially as they have been struck off the roll of the Turkish army. In these circumstances His Majesty's Government must remind the Italian government that, the conditions of the treaty of Lausanne having been fulfilled, the time has come for them to redeem their solemn and reiterated pledges and evacuate the islands.

E. A. C.
Dec[ember] 3.
A. N.
E. G.

The Italian Ambassador unfortunately told me yesterday that Turkish officers have gone to Cyrenaica and that the Italians have got a correspondence between Talaat and Enver, who is at the bottom of the whole thing. The Ambassador is ready to give me this information.

E. G.
4.12.13.

No. 163.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 54106/38220/13/44.

(No. 359.)

Sir:—

St. Petersburg, D. November 24, 1913.

R. December 1, 1913.

The conclusion of peace between Turkey and Greece through the intermediary of the Roumanian Prime Minister could not fail to give rise to some bitter reflections in St. Petersburg. A short time ago it would have been natural to expect Russia and not Roumania to appear as the mediator between these two antagonists, and it is necessarily galling to Russians to see Roumania successfully fulfilling a part which Russia attempted and failed to take on herself at the moment when war was about to break out between Bulgaria and her former Allies. Nor has the soreness caused here by the recent course of events in the Balkans been diminished by the present attitude of King Ferdinand and the Austrophil Statesmen who are now in control at Sofia.

Russian publicists naturally complain of the ingratitude of the Balkan States. They point out that when Austria mobilized at the commencement of the first Balkan campaign in 1912, Russia by maintaining an extra force of 400,000 men under arms kept the Dual Monarchy in check and saved the Allies from an Austrian advance in their rear which must have been fatal to their plans. In addition to the inestimable service thus rendered to the Allies Russia supplied Bulgaria during the campaign with money, arms and ammunition, and also with the fuel which the Balkan Railways lacked and without which the victorious advance of the Allies would have been arrested at a critical moment. It might have been supposed after these occurrences that counsels proffered by Russia at Sofia, Belgrade and Athens would have been allowed the force of commands. Yet when Russia called on the Allies to submit their quarrels to her arbitration the reply which she received from each was tantamount to a refusal.

When Russians complain of the ingratitude of their Balkan protégés they are apt to forget that the Balkan States on their side have during the past twelve months been severely disillusioned with regard to the extent of the support which they could expect from Russia. Events have shown that when the territorial expansion of the Balkan States brought them into opposition with the wishes and plans of Austria-Hungary Russia was not disposed to run the risk of war in the interests of her protégés even though those interests were of first-rate importance. Russia's decision was no doubt a wise one, but something more had unquestionably been expected of her by the Balkan peoples and also, as I believe, by the majority of Russians themselves. The prudent policy which she adopted during the recent complications could not but react unfavourably, for the time being at least, on her influence and prestige in the Balkan Peninsula.

I have, &c.

HUGH O'BEIRNE.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Elliot.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 53772/106/13/44.

(No. 146.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, November 25, 1913.

The Greek Minister asked me to-day about the question of the Ægean Islands.

I said that it had not been raised amongst the Great Powers for the last few months. I observed that Greece was in occupation of the Islands, and I asked him why he mentioned the matter.

He said that he did so only incidentally, but there were unfavourable rumours to the effect that the Islands, or some of them, were to be formed into a Confederation apart from Greece.

I said that I could not say that no Power was likely to raise the question of the Islands, but it had not been raised lately,⁽²⁾ and as Greece was in possession I did not see that it was to her interest that it should be raised, nor had I thought it wise to raise it.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp infra*, pp 151-2, No 166; p. 339, No. 378.]

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Private.⁽²⁾

Dear Sir Edward,

Constantinople, November 25, 1913.

I have been trying to find out whether anything is going on between Italy and Turkey about the islands in the occupation of the former, but hitherto I have not been successful. The Grand Vizier poured derision on the story of an Italian loan secured on one of the islands, although that is far from being a conclusive proof that no negotiations have been on foot, because it is quite possible that a secret emissary of the Committee has been engaged on them, behind His Highness' back. We have discovered that an agent of this kind has recently returned from Rome, but his mission which was supposed to have for its object the acquisition of two Italian warships is said to have failed. Our [*sic* : ? One] story is that the war-ships were to be given in exchange for Stampalia.

The general impression seems to be that Italy means to give back the islands, but not until the question of the islands now occupied by Greece is settled. The Grand Vizier said to one of my colleagues on Monday that he did not want the surrender to take place till then.

If Italy does restore the islands to Turkey, we may be sure that she will retain some kind of lien on some of them.

There is a great feeling here about the islands now in the possession of Greece. The Grand Vizier has said to me more than once that Turkey will fight unless the Powers decide in her favour. Mitylene and Chios are those to which they attach the most importance; it is assumed that Imbros and Tenedos at any rate will go to them. He says that they must be restored without condition and will not hear of autonomy. I am convinced that a solution unfavourable to Turkey will not be accepted here and that the Turks are quite prepared to march on Greece, and set the Balkans ablaze if they are thwarted.

⁽¹⁾ [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Sir A. Nicolson.]

⁽²⁾ [Grey MSS., Vol. 41.]

My new Bulgarian colleague Tocheff, who talks very freely, deplors this possibility and earnestly hopes that the Powers will decide in Turkey's favour, because if war breaks out in the spring, Bulgaria will not be able to profit by it, as she would do if it happened four or five years hence.

My German and Austrian colleagues are openly in favour of Turkey, but Giers has not committed himself in speaking to me and Bompard is very difficult to see. He is at present busily engaged in making up to the Turks, and the visit of the much admired Lapeyrère is being made the occasion of great demonstrations of friendship. I hear, however, that the francophil manifestations in Beyrout have caused great misgivings here.

It would be interesting to know what line the French and Russians will take about the islands, but I sincerely hope that a division of opinion between the Triple Alliance and the Triple Entente will be avoided and that we shall not be forced into taking up a hostile attitude to Turkey over this question.

That would really be the last straw so far as our influence here is concerned. The Turks have received several shocks in the last two years and will not stand much more. On the whole they are pleased with Mr. Asquith's last speech,⁽³⁾ but a little shy and inclined to contrast it with his Salonica and Adrianople speeches. . . .⁽⁴⁾

Yours sincerely,
LOUIS MALLET.

⁽³⁾ [The reference is presumably to Mr. Asquith's speech at the Guildhall on November 10, v. *The Times*, November 11, 1913.]

⁽⁴⁾ [The remaining paragraphs refer to Armenian Reforms (*cp. infra*, pp. 424-548, *passim*) and the riverain concession (*cp. infra*, p. 361, No. 405, *note* ⁽⁶⁾). They add nothing of importance to information given elsewhere.]

No. 166.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 54052/13799/13/44.

(No. 717.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, November 26, 1913.

M. Cambon told me to-day that the Greek Minister in Paris had urged upon M. Pichon that the decision about the southern frontier of Albania, mentioning Koritza, should be reconsidered by the Ambassadors' reunion. M. Pichon had said that it was impossible to go back upon the question of Koritza, and it could not be reconsidered.

I told M. Cambon of the protest that the Greek Minister had made here yesterday, and of what I had replied, both about the southern frontier of Albania and about the *Ægean Islands*.⁽²⁾

M. Cambon said that Greece was to have the Islands if Koritza and Stylos went to Albania.

I said that undoubtedly this had been the understanding on which a decision had been arrived at to give Koritza and Stylos to Albania. The Powers had undertaken no obligation towards Greece in the matter, but the understanding between them had been that Greece was to keep all the islands in her occupation, except Tenedos and Imbros; and, if any other decision was come to about the islands, it would be open to any of the Powers to re-open the question of the southern frontier of Albania. I had spoken in this sense to the Italian Ambassador when he had asked me about the matter; and, I thought, also to the German *Chargé d'Affaires*.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 69-70, No. 84; p. 150, No. 164; *cp. also supra*, pp. 70-1, *Ed. note.*]

M. Cambon said there had been a report that Sir Rennell Rodd had proposed that the islands should be formed into a separate Confederation. M. Cambon asked me whether I had discussed the matter with him.

I said that I had not discussed such a proposal with Sir Rennell Rodd at all. I had given him certain instructions before he returned to Rome,⁽²⁾ but I had not given him any instructions about the islands in the occupation of Greece. In regard to the islands in the occupation of Italy, I had instructed him to point out to the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs that the longer this question dragged on the more awkward it would become; and to urge upon him that the Italian Government should give the islands back to Turkey. The Powers could then decide about their future destiny. All that we could press Italy to do was to give them back to Turkey, in accordance with the Treaty of Lausanne.

M. Cambon showed me some information from Constantinople to the effect that the Turks admitted that they had not yet pressed Italy to restore the *Ægean* islands that were at present in Italian occupation, but affirmed that they were going to do so.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

(³) [i. immediately succeeding document, and *note* (²)]

No. 167.

Sir R. Rodd to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 55119/39484/13/44.

Tel. (No. 218.)

Rome, December 6, 1913.

Minister for Foreign Affairs, whom I saw to-day, at once entered into conversation on some of the points which you directed me on 26th November to discuss.⁽²⁾

As regards islands in Italian occupation some progress may be recorded, as his Excellency seems now to have abandoned the plea that the presence of Turkish troops in Cyrenaica makes a continuance of occupation imperative, and reiterates emphatically that Italy entirely upholds view adopted by Powers that none of them should seek territorial acquisitions from Turkey, whose Empire in Asia it is Italy's interest to preserve permanently if possible. The one point, however, which he considers of imperative importance is that Italy should find some sphere for economic and commercial development in Turkish Empire. There was a disposition to meet their views in Turkey as regards south-west angle of Asia Minor, but nothing of a concrete character had yet been concluded. I explained your views as to Smyrna-Aidin Railway Company, and he said he quite realised that they had both established rights and interests, but he did not see why there should not be found means of conciliation of these with some sphere of activity for Italy. There were harbour works both at Adalia and elsewhere and other fields of enterprise of a not too ambitious or costly character. If these could be obtained for Italy in a definite form, he felt it would become easy for her to proceed with evacuation of the islands and to deal with public opinion, which expected some return for money and energy expended on occupation. He had himself thought it might be of advantage that Italy should endeavour to deal directly with railway company, and if that met your views he was prepared at once to approach them.

(¹) [The text given above is taken from the *Confidential Print*, as the original decypher cannot be traced.]

(²) [cp. immediately preceding document. Reference to Sir Edward Grey's instructions to Sir Rennell Rodd while the latter was in England occur in *D.D.F.*, 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VIII, p. 681, No. 538; p. 686, No. 545; pp. 754-5, No. 601; p. 775, No. 618]

Sir Edward Grey to Sir R. Rodd.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 55119/39484/13/44.

Tel. (No. 366.)

Foreign Office, December 11, 1913.

Your Excellency's telegram No. 218 of 6th December.⁽²⁾

It will not do to connect schemes of Italian expansion on mainland of Asiatic Turkey with the question of Italian evacuation of the islands.⁽³⁾ Respecting the islands, Italian Government have given us repeated and solemn assurances, which we cannot how [*sic*: now] be expected to treat as contingent on extraneous conditions under which Italy would obtain compensation in some other form elsewhere.

Apart from this, the policy of His Majesty's Government, and we believe of other Powers interested in Turkey, is altogether opposed to the division of Turkish territory into defined spheres of interest, which would be tantamount to the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire. It is accordingly desirable to restrict discussion to the consideration of particular concessions in particular places, a course which has been followed in respect to German and French railway schemes.

If the Italian Government are right in holding that their Adalia concession does not encroach upon the district of the Smyrna-Aidin Railway, they should have no difficulty in coming to an amicable arrangement with the British company, but the mention of harbour works at Adalia and local lines starting from that port for the interior makes it very doubtful whether the view is in fact accurate; for such enterprises would, so far as I am able to judge, undoubtedly run counter to the letter and spirit of the British company's concession, and would seriously compromise their position.

The situation is made needlessly difficult for us by our remaining in ignorance of the precise terms of the Italian concession.

Your Excellency should, in speaking to the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs, bring the above views to his notice, and endeavour to obtain a copy of their concession.

(1) [The text given above is taken from the *Confidential Print*, as the original decypher cannot be traced.]

(2) [*v.* immediately preceding document.]

(3) [*cp. D.D.F.*, 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VIII, p. 770, No. 613.]

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen.

F.O. 55760/18799/13/44.

Tel. (No. 418.) Confidential.

Foreign Office, December 12, 1913.

My immediately preceding telegram.⁽¹⁾

I should be glad if Your Excellency could see the Chancellor himself and make to him in my name an appeal that he will not only consider favourably the proposed settlement of the question of the islands, but will use his influence at Vienna and especially at Rome in the same direction.

I have reason to believe that the Turkish government is being encouraged by certain Powers in their design of a reconquest of Chios and Mitylene. I should look upon a renewed outbreak of war between Turkey and Greece with dismay. It would reopen all the difficulties now happily allayed by the conclusion of general peace, but the difficulties would be accentuated, would have still more far-reaching consequences,

(1) [*v. supra*, pp. 76-7, No. 91, and note (1).]

and might seriously strain the friendly relations which we have so far succeeded, not without much patient effort, in maintaining between the Great Powers.

I feel confident that the Chancellor will recognize the justice of this view.⁽²⁾ I confess that I can think of no alternative solution to that now put forward; and some solution seems to me imperative.

(²) [*cp. supra*, p. 79, No. 93]

No. 170.

Sir R. Rodd to Sir Edward Grey.

Rome, December 13, 1913.

F.O. 56303/39484/13/44.

Tel. (No. 222.)

D. 1.13 P.M.

R. 6.45 P.M.

I spoke last night to the Minister for Foreign Affairs in the sense of your telegram No. 366 of Dec[ember] 11.⁽¹⁾

He said that the idea of connecting concessions from Turkey with the evacuation of the islands was rather put forward by him as personal to myself and with a view to facilitating the task of the Government in Italy than with the idea of new conditions. He maintained that Turkey, by not carrying out treaty conditions, had entailed on this country increased expenditure caused by the prolongation of resistance in Cyrenaica and the maintenance of the occupation of the islands.

I objected that Turkey claimed to have done all she could to remove the Turkish troops. This he would not admit, and alleged suspicion that she did not desire to accelerate evacuation because she feared that the islands might go to Greece. Italy was entitled to an indemnity for the prolongation of this situation, and he had thought that the best means of settlement would be by a grant to Italians of concessions which would compensate for losses incurred. The Ministry had to deal with a young and excitable nation, and he felt that I must realise that at the present moment no Government could propose the abandonment of the one lever they possessed for exercising pressure on Turkey, which had not even asked for the restitution of the islands, without having some plausible pretext for their action. He repeated assurances as to the sincerity of their ultimate intentions and firm resolve not to incorporate in this kingdom any European populations other than Italian and thus sacrifice the existing advantages of homogeneity. These assurances will be repeated in the Chamber, probably to-day. Any overt pressure by the Powers, which he earnestly trusted would not be exerted, would only increase the difficulties of the Government by arousing opposition here. I urged that the longer it was delayed the more difficult it must become. He agreed, but urged the necessity of awaiting an opportune moment which he felt would present itself if they had some success to report in the negotiations for concessions. As his Excellency has returned to the standpoint of the Treaty of Lausanne, it may be worth considering whether Turkey should not now take some initiative and claim to have fulfilled the treaty.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs quite agreed with you as to the inadvisability of claiming a sphere of interest. He had done all he could to check the campaign initiated in Turin "*Stampa*" (see Mr. Dering's despatch No. 298).⁽²⁾ The idea that a sphere of interest had been marked out arose from Italy's having endeavoured to find some region for economic concessions where she would not be in conflict with those obtained by other countries. He had no knowledge, when the question first arose, of the extent of the concession of the Smyrna-Aidin Railway. Now that he knew he realised that the only course was to endeavour to come to terms with that company.

(¹) [*v. supra*, p. 153, No. 168.]

(²) [Mr. Dering's despatch (No. 298), D. October 29, R. November 1, 1913, merely analysed articles in the *Stampa*. (F.O. 49568/39484/13/44.)]

On my again asking whether any real concession existed, and, if so, what were its terms, he admitted that an Italian syndicate had received authorisation to make studies. In so far as that was a concession, it might be said to exist, but there was no concession for any concrete undertakings. He said that he did not know whether a copy of the vaguely worded document drawn up at Constantinople existed in the Italian Foreign Office, but could ask the director of the "Commercial Bank," which seems to be the promoter, whether it could be communicated to me.

MINUTE.

Italy persists in keeping us in the dark about the terms of her concession. Evidently she cannot afford to be open and frank about it

E. A. C.
Dec[ember] 15
A. N.
E. G.

No. 171.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir L. Mallet.

F.O. 57005/13799/13/44.
(No. 461.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, December 16, 1913.

The Turkish Ambass[ado]r observed to Sir A. Nicolson this afternoon that he had read in this morning's papers a telegram from Paris to the effect that H[is] M[ajesty's] Gov[ernmen]t had proposed to the Powers a solution of the question of the islands, and that Imbros and Tenedos were to be left to Turkey.⁽¹⁾ He wished to point out that, if it were true that the Powers were discussing the above question, Turkey had always requested that islands lying in close proximity to the mainland, such as Scio and Mitylene, should not be placed in other than Turkish hands.

Sir A. Nicolson told Tewfik Pasha that, as the Southern Albanian frontier delimitation was approaching completion, we had felt the moment had come to raise the question of the future of the islands, as a solution could not be indefinitely postponed. We were, therefore, in communication with the Powers on the subject, and as the question was not an easy one intercommunication would probably take some time.⁽²⁾

Tewfik P[ash]a said he wished to tell Sir A. Nicolson confidentially that the Italians had explained privately to the Turkish Gov[ernmen]t that they would be unable to evacuate the Dodekanese until Greece had evacuated islands so close to the mainland as Scio and Mitylene.⁽³⁾

[I am, &c.
E. G.]

⁽¹⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp. 76-7, No. 91.]

⁽²⁾ [In Sir A. Nicolson's original record of this conversation, on which the despatch is based, he added here: "Further information I did not give him."]

⁽³⁾ [Note by Sir A. Nicolson: "We had heard of this from other sources." Note by Sir Edward Grey: "Something should be said to M. Cambon to point out the unfortunate effect of our note having been communicated to the French press: it is most unfortunate and will very likely prejudice whatever chances the proposal had of being accepted. E. G." For the note, *v. supra*, pp. 76-7, No. 91.]

No. 172.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 57407/18799/18/44.

(No. 1011.)

Constantinople, D. December 16, 1913.

Sir,

R. December 22, 1913.

The Italian Ambassador, Marquis Garroni, having returned from leave of absence, I paid him an official visit this morning. After the usual exchange of courtesies, I asked the present position with regard to the islands.

He said that all those in Italian possession would be restored to Turkey according to the terms of the Treaty of Lausanne, when the conditions mentioned therein were fulfilled. Doubt had been cast on the good faith of Italy, but it was the truth,—Italy had no wish to retain possession of these Islands which would be a source of weakness instead of strength, unless the Italian Fleet were largely increased, and this would mean a large expenditure for which Italy was not prepared.

I enquired what were His Excellency's views in regard to the Islands now occupied by Greece. He said that he understood that the Powers intended to award them all to Greece save Tenedos and Imbros. I replied that I knew nothing of the intentions of my Government, and enquired what he thought of the proposal.

He said that he did not think it was wise and that it might lead to trouble. It was in the interest of both Great Britain and Italy to maintain the integrity of Turkey, and the possession of Mitylene and Chios by Greece, if agreed to by Turkey, would be a standing menace to her, for it would be a foyer of intrigue with the mainland, which the Turks would be unable to control as they do now. There were many thousands of Greeks on the littoral, which would soon be converted into a second Macedonia. He thought it possible that the Turkish Government would not tamely submit to such a decree of the Powers.

I enquired what line the Italian Government would take in regard to the proposal. He said that the Italian Government were very anxious to be on good terms with His Majesty's Government, who, he understood, would press for its adoption, and that they would probably give way in order to please Great Britain, but he personally thought that such a policy would have bad results.

The Marquis Garroni is a very able man which is shown by the position held here by Italy only a year after the war, and, as you are aware, he is an intimate friend of Signor Giolitti.

I have, &c.

LOUIS MALLET.

MINUTE.

We now know that the Italian Government is secretly doing the very opposite of what they profess.⁽¹⁾

E. A. C.

Dec[ember] 24.

E. G.

(¹) [*v. infra*, pp. 163-4, No. 179, and note (²)]

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 57414/13799/13/44.

(No. 1018.)

Sir:—

Pera, D. December 17, 1913.

R. December 22, 1913.

I have the honour to report that rumours have recently reached Turkish official circles to the effect that His Majesty's Government is about to initiate a proposal that, of the islands occupied by Greece, only Tenedos and Imbros should revert to Turkey while the remainder—including Chios, Mitylene, Samos &c. should be left to Greece.

As I already have had occasion to report, such a decision would be strongly resented by the present Government of Turkey, the Grand Vizier having once stated to me (*vide* my despatch No. 937 Confidential of Nov[ember] 15th, 1913)⁽²⁾ that Turkey would go to war with Greece rather than agree to any such solution.

The feeling here is so strong on the subject that it would be easy to create an atmosphere from which war would be the only issue.

The recent civil and military appointments to, and the military dispositions in, the Smyrna region go to denote the intention to adopt extreme measures in the matter of the islands close to the Smyrna coastland, while, should Turkey not be in a position to operate successfully against Greece by sea, indications are not wanting that the Salonican and Macedonian elements in the Committee would welcome a pretext, should the international position be favourable, for marching against Greece through Western Thrace in the double hope of forcing Greece to restore the islands and of freeing Salonica and its Macedonian hinterland from Greek, and perhaps, Servian rule. Should such a situation arise, it would appear that the Bulgarians, who would equally welcome the disappearance of Greek and Servian rule, none too popular among the non-Greek and non-Serb elements in Macedonia, would content themselves with a *pro forma* protest against the passage of Turkish troops through western Thrace, and that they would be willing to retrocede that district to Turkey in return for territory west of the Mesta kara sou or even for the autonomy of Macedonia. There are signs that the Bulgarian occupation of Western Thrace is not at present of a permanent character while the Turkish bands organisation, which played such a prominent part in the reoccupation of the Adrianople and adjoining districts in July last, is still kept up here and has connection with the elements in Albania which some time ago engaged in the anti-Serb attacks.

It would thus seem that the question of the islands now occupied by Greece may serve as a pretext or cause for Turkish military adventures west of the Maritza. That His Majesty's Government should be held responsible for a decision in the matter adverse to Turkey would naturally render her unpopular here and would be difficult to reconcile in the Turkish mind with the friendly statements made by the Prime Minister in his Guildhall speech.⁽³⁾ while in the general interests of Turkey it would seem highly undesirable that she should be afforded any pretext for, or incentive to, engaging in adventures of a nature seriously to impair, if not to imperil, the vital work of reform in her Asiatic provinces.

I have, &c.

LOUIS MALLET.

MINUTES.

It w[oul]d have a most salutary effect on the Turks if the Germans told them to keep quiet. We have incurred unpopularity both in Greece and Turkey by our proposals designed to find a way out of the position of suspense that has prevailed all too long. It is time some one else did a bit too—especially Germany. C[oul]d this be pointed out? Another reason

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet. A copy was sent to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 144–5, No. 160.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. The Times*, November 11, 1913.]

why Turkey can be kept from war is the financial situation. France can help there. Turkey should get no help till the question of the islands is solved and the decision of the Powers accepted by her.

R. G. V.
Dec[ember] 23.

I very much doubt whether Germany would put any pressure on the Porte, however much they professed to agree with us in theory.

We have made our proposal to the 5 Powers and shall know where we stand when we get their considered replies. Meanwhile the Turks are getting accustomed to the situation, "public opinion" is busily blowing off steam, and when, if ever, a concrete proposal is put before them it will anyhow not have the disadvantages of an unexpected blow.

Nor need we be deterred from our course by threats of a Turco-Greek war in the spring: there is a long road between Turkish speech and action.

G. R. C.
23.xii.13.
E. A. C.
Dec[ember] 23.
E. G.

No. 174.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Private.⁽²⁾

Dear Sir Edward,

Pera, December 17, 1913.

We have made our enquiry and are not very much the wiser. Perhaps the fact that the Commandant de Place is responsible for order here under the direct orders of the Minister of War during a state of siege may enable Russia to take a more lenient view.

Personally I am sorry that we have made this démarche though the telegrams from St. Petersburg which have now arrived in the sections explain the difficulty of our position.⁽³⁾

The situation is a difficult one here. All the Powers including ourselves, are trying hard to get what they can out of Turkey. They all profess to wish the maintenance of Turkey's integrity but no one ever thinks of this in practice. Although I fully admit their shortcomings it appears to me to be much against our interests to allow this Government to go to pieces either by suggesting ourselves any action or by supporting any action which might have an injurious effect upon them. On the contrary I think we ought to give them what support we can.

It might be argued that it would be dangerous to give this Government money, which might be spent on war with Greece, supposing the Powers ignore the Turkish point of view in respect of the islands. But, it might be equally dangerous to thwart their wishes and to give them no money for they would then be more tempted to take the Debt revenues and would employ them as they liked. It must be remembered that the men at present in power are very energetic to say the least of it. They might be called desperate. It is they who made the coup d'état because the Government were signing away Adrianople and they might not submit tamely to an arrangement by which they were deprived of Mitylene and Chios which the Grand Vizier has described

⁽¹⁾ [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to the Prime Minister; to Sir A. Nicolson; to Sir E. Crowe; with copies of Sir Edward Grey's private telegram in reply, and of his private letter of December 23, *v. infra*, pp. 164-5, Nos. 180-1.]

⁽²⁾ [Grey MSS., Vol. 41.]

⁽³⁾ [The reference here is probably to Mr. O'Beirne's telegrams (No. 382) of November 10, 1913, and (No. 387) of November 18, 1913. The former stated that Russia had advised the Porte to show moderation in the negotiations with Greece and quoted the Russian view that there would be no Turkish loan floated in Paris until Turkey concluded peace. (F.O. 51124/33220/13/44.) The second of these telegrams reported M. Sazonov's anxiety to resume the Conference of Ambassadors in London, as the only practical means of settling the question of the Ægean Islands. (F.O. 52471/106/13/44.) The term "sections" in the text above refers to the *Confidential Print*]

to me as vital to their security, as I have reported in my despatch No. 937⁽¹⁾ and in my private letter of November 25th.⁽²⁾

On the arrival of the new Military Attaché last week, I asked him to study in all its bearings the likelihood of Turkey being able to take military action and he is starting today on a journey to Thrace to see whether any preparations are being made.

I am relying on your statement to me before I left England that you did not propose to take any initiative in the matter of the islands, and if you have done so I hope that Turkey's point of view will be borne in mind, otherwise there may be trouble.

My own position, however, except in so far as British interests are concerned, is not of importance, but I shall feel very uncomfortable with the Grand Vizier and Talaat, who have confidence in my good will, and whom I have been endeavouring to persuade of British sincerity and friendship, if His Majesty's Government have made proposals unfavourable to Turkey.

Yours sincerely,
LOUIS MALLET.

(⁴) [*v. supra*, pp. 144-5, No. 160.]

(⁵) [*v. supra*, pp. 150-1, No. 165.]

No. 175.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 57204/18799/18/44.

Constantinople, December 19, 1913.

Tel. (No. 634.)

R. 10 P.M.

My telegram No. 631 of 17th December.⁽¹⁾

All colleagues are in possession of British proposals, which are known everywhere. My official ignorance of them places me in a somewhat false position to enquirers.⁽²⁾

Comments in press are naturally unfavourable; initiative of His Majesty's Government is looked upon as a very great moral blow to Turkey.⁽³⁾ The leading Government organ states that fact of His Majesty's Government making proposals so injuriously affecting Turkey's vital interests in Anatolia is inconsistent with your profession of interest in Turkish integrity.

It is painful for Turkey to realise that England, who took lead in Adrianople campaign, deliberately pursues a policy of reversal of friendship to her. And it is remarked that it appears from manner in which proposals are (? stated) that His Majesty's Government's decision has been taken, not on merits of question, but on opportunist grounds.

(¹) [Sir L. Mallet's telegram (No. 631) of December 17, 1913, D. 4 P.M., R. 5-30 P.M. (F.O. 56901/18799/18/44), is not reproduced as the substance is given more fully in his despatch (No. 1018) of December 17. *v. supra*, p. 157, No. 173.]

(²) [*cp. supra*, pp. 76-7, No. 91, and note (¹); *infra*, p. 161, No. 177.]

(³) [*cp. infra*, pp. 162-3, No. 178.]

No. 176.

Sir M. de Bunsen to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 57433/18799/18/44.

Vienna, D. December 19, 1913.

(No. 201.) Confidential.

R. December 22, 1913.

Sir,

Count Berchtold has now made his last speech on Foreign Affairs both in the Austrian and the Hungarian Delegations. The votes in both assemblies on the Secret Service Fund display a very qualified approval of his policy, and the constant repetition against him of the same charges throughout the discussions show that his explanations have not been convincing. Criticism tended always to concentrate on three principal

points, namely (1) his failure to define before the war the sphere of Austro-Hungarian interests which the Servians should not be allowed to transgress, (2) the use made of the Prochaska incident to stir up warlike feeling and so to justify mobilization, and (3) the alienation of Roumania by pressing for revision of the Treaty of Bucharest. To these indictments he replied generally that to draw a hard and fast line beyond which Serbia was not to penetrate would have meant war, and would have exposed the Monarchy to the reproach of seeking to check the expansion of the Christian States of the Balkans; that no unnecessary mystery was kept up in the Prochaska case by the Press Bureau; and that every effort had been made to retain the friendship of Roumania.

From a usually well-informed quarter I have heard that Count Berchtold may shortly take the opportunity of resigning his present office. An indication pointing that way is perhaps to be found in the fact that the office of Chief Chamberlain, recently rendered available by the death of Count Gudenus, is not yet filled up. Count Berchtold is thought to be peculiarly well fitted for the post, which requires a man of cultivated taste to take charge of the Imperial Art Collections. Possibly this office is being kept open for him. But the Emperor may think it more important to keep him where he is. Personally Count Berchtold is known to desire relief from the unceasing work of the Foreign Office. Whatever may be said eventually of the results of his policy, the Monarchy must feel relieved of a great anxiety by the dissolution of the Balkan Alliance, and as a set-off against the vast expenditure involved in mobilization it may well point to the greatly increased power and efficiency of the joint army which have by this means been secured, without the actual risks of war.

I have already reported by telegraph that the French and Russian Ambassadors are supporting here your proposals for a general settlement of the Islands question.⁽¹⁾ M. Dumaine had several times spoken to me on the subject of the Islands before your instruction came. Personally he had inclined towards a solution founded on the formation of a purely nominal Turkish Governorship for the whole of the Ægean Islands, both those in Greek and those in Italian occupation,—excepting always the two nearest to the mouth of the Dardanelles. The Islands would all have obtained, under this arrangement, the autonomy which you are now proposing to reserve to the Dodecanese under Turkish sovereignty. His Excellency had sounded M. Streit, the universally consulted Greek Minister, as to how far Greece would fall in with such a suggestion. M. Dumaine was led by M. Streit's reply to think that Greece would have reluctantly accepted. When therefore I informed him of your proposals he expressed some surprise at the contemplated exemptions of Mitylene and Chios from Turkish sovereignty. He has since learned that his Government entirely agrees with your view, which he is wholeheartedly supporting at Vienna, though himself very apprehensive of resistance at Constantinople assuming proportions which it will require force to overcome.

To me the Greek Minister, as I have remarked in another despatch,⁽²⁾ has not concealed his opinion, formed possibly since he has become aware of the British proposal, that war would result from the attempt on the part of Turkey to take possession of the Islands now held by Greece.

M. de Tschirschky, German Ambassador, is himself not unfriendly towards the Greeks, and I presume his feelings on this point correspond to the present direction of German policy.⁽³⁾ He has assured me of the desire which would be felt at Berlin to meet as far as possible any proposal coming from yourself. On the other hand he has expressed himself to me as being very doubtful whether your proposals, useful though

(1) [Sir M. de Bunsen's telegram (No. 199) of December 17, D. 8.5 P.M., R. 10.30 P.M., contained this information. It is not reproduced as its contents are given more fully above (F.O. 56906/13799/13/44).]

(2) [Sir M. de Bunsen's despatch (No. 200), D. December 18, R. December 21, 1913, is not reproduced as the contents are sufficiently indicated above. It mentioned the appointment of M. Streit as Greek Minister for Foreign Affairs. (F.O. 57432/57432/13/44).]

(3) [*cp. supra*, pp. 157-8, No. 173, and *min.*]

he admits them to be, can be realized in their present form. He fears desperate resistance from Turkey, considerable hesitation at Rome, and that in any case a long negotiation will be required.

The Turkish Ambassador, Hilmi Pasha, informed me yesterday that he had enquired at Constantinople as to the impression made there by the press accounts of your proposals. He had been told in reply that the Turkish Government could not acquiesce in a transference of sovereignty from Turkey to Greece over islands lying in the close vicinity of the coast of Asia Minor. Turkey indeed, had agreed, with Greece, to leave the disposal of the Islands in the hands of the Great Powers, but in doing so had expressly stipulated that due account should be taken of legitimate Turkish claims. I do not know whether, in making these remarks, His Excellency referred to any specific communication made by Turkey to the Powers in this connection.

The French Ambassador is to see Count Berchtold today on the subject of your proposals. The new Russian Ambassador, M. Shebeko, has already seen His Excellency and spoken strongly in support of them. Count Berchtold could not give him any indication of what would be his final decision. It is perhaps as well that, before giving me his views, Count Berchtold should have had an opportunity of hearing how the question is regarded in Paris and Petersburg.

I have, &c.

MAURICE DE BUNSEN.

No. 177.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir L. Mallet.

F.O. 56901/18799/13/44.

Tel. (No. 587.)

Foreign Office, December 20, 1913, 1.15 p.m.

Your Excellency's telegram No. 631 (56901 of Dec[ember] 17⁽¹⁾: Ægean Islands).

I have despatched to you by post on December 18 full text of my proposals.⁽²⁾ I purposely did not do so before, as I thought it might be an advantage to you to be able to decline any discussion with the Porte so long as uncertainty prevailed as to the form in which my proposals would emerge from the discussion with the Powers. I much regret that practically our whole proposal has now appeared in the "Temps" which renders it impossible to preserve its confidential character.⁽³⁾ This being so it is better that Y[our] E[xcellency] should be fully informed.

Should the Ottoman Government raise question, you should dwell on the fact that the general line consistently adopted by the Powers has been, subject to the maintenance of an independent Albania, to recognize the territorial status quo established as the result of the appeal to arms. This was notably the case as regards the fate of Adrianople and Eastern Thrace. On the same principle, the islands conquered and occupied by Greece should remain with her, an exception in favour of Turkey being made in the case of Tenedos and Imbros, and special guarantees proposed to safeguard Turkey against any danger that the islands close to the Asiatic coast might be used to embarrass Turkey.

On the other hand Y[our] E[xcellency] should lay stress on the fact that we want the islands in Italian occupation to revert to Turkey. The Porte has hitherto been evidently embarrassed in working for Italian evacuation by the fear that the islands would fall to Greece. If our proposal is accepted, this question will be settled in favour of Turkey by securing and placing on record a formal decision of the Powers that Italy must withdraw.

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 159, No. 175, and note ⁽¹⁾.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 76-7, No. 91, and note ⁽¹⁾.]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. infra*, pp. 163-4, No. 179. A version of the note was published in *Le Temps* on December 14, 1913. *cp. The Times*, December 17, 1913, pp. 7, 9.]

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 57836/18799/18/44. Constantinople, D. December 22, 1913, 8 P.M.

Tel. (No. 687.)

R. December 23, 1913, 12.45 P.M. [sic].

Your tel[egram] No. 587 of Dec[ember] 20.⁽¹⁾

GREEK ISLANDS.

The Grand Vizier spoke to me at his official reception, which I attended on account of other business, respecting the British proposal which His Highness said had taken him entirely by surprise and had been a bitter disillusion to the Government as to the sentiments of His Majesty's Government. I replied that I regretted the unintentional discourtesy to the Porte involved in the premature and mischievous publication of the proposals but I had myself only become aware of them through the press and had on Saturday only received an instruction from you on the subject. As to His Majesty's Government's action the question had been left to the Powers to settle, or had to be settled, and it was natural that you should take the lead as the Conference had been held in London. I proceeded to argue in the sense of your instruction respecting the general lines observed by the Powers in recognizing the territorial status quo resulting from the appeal to arms. His Highness replied that if that were the case the Powers might just as well have left the matter alone. He had understood that the object of leaving the question to the Powers was to secure a settlement which would be accepted by Turkey and Greece. The settlement proposed by His Majesty's Government would never be accepted by Turkey and was bound to lead to war sooner or later.

He felt that M. Venizelos would not like the proposal either because he had had it indirectly from him that he would be embarrassed if Mitylene and Chios were left to Greece knowing that it would involve Greece in another war. I expressed my surprise and His Highness repeated the statement categorically. He went on to state that if His Majesty's Government were guided by the rule of status quo why did they give Imbros and Tenedos to Turkey? I said that His Highness could scarcely complain of a breach of this principle so entirely in their favour and that Imbros and Tenedos had been left to Turkey for strategic reasons which were obvious. As to Mitylene and Chios they would only be a source of weakness to Turkey. An agitation would be set on foot for reannexation to Greece and they would constitute two Cretes lying off the mainland whilst under the conditions proposed in the British Note they could not be a source of danger to Turkey. His Highness denied that these islands had been elements of unrest like Crete. Their population was peaceful and commercial which if left under the Turkish rule would not have complained. If they remained Greek they would be centres of intrigue from Athens and no safeguard could be provided against that. As he had told me before possession of these islands was a matter of life and death to Turkey who would not give them up. I said that they were already in Greek possession and that it was more a question of Greece giving them up which she would be unlikely to do without a struggle. I went on to point out advantages of British proposal so far as islands occupied by Italy were concerned. His Highness did not agree. He said that Italy had undertaken by treaty to restore them to Turkey. Greece could not take them without declaring war and Turkey could not be expected to be grateful to the Powers for not taking them from her and giving them to Greece.

His Highness went on to speak most bitterly of England's attitude. The Porte no longer believed what they were always being told that she or any of the other Powers wanted her regeneration. They wanted the destruction of Turkey. They boycotted them when they were starving for money. They refused them officials for reforming provinces. They were creating troubles about military mission⁽²⁾ when Russian Ambassador had known for months past that it was contemplated and might have pointed out in a friendly manner to the Porte the Russian objections instead of waiting until it was too late and the question was settled.

⁽¹⁾ [v. immediately preceding document, and note ⁽²⁾.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. infra*, pp. 338-423, Chapter LXXXVII, *passim*.]

I said that I deeply regretted that His Highness should imagine that His Majesty's Government were actuated by unfriendly feeling. I thought that some of their difficulties were of the Porte's own creation and that there had been the most deplorable delay about Armenian reforms and as to the Military Mission it might have occurred to the Porte that objection would be taken to a foreign commander in the capital.

MINUTE.

See records of my conversation with Tewfik Pasha and M. de Fleuriau to-day and minutes thereon.⁽³⁾

E A. C.
Dec[ember] 23
E G

⁽³⁾ [Sir E. Crowe's conversation with Tewfik Pasha is described *infra*, p 173, No. 187; his conversation on the same day with M. de Fleuriau was recorded in Sir Edward Grey's despatch (No. 1) to Sir F. Bertie of January 1, 1914. The record shows that a Turkish communication had been made at Paris "to the effect that the Turkish Government would absolutely refuse their consent to the islands near the Asiatic mainland being left to Greece and that if necessary they would go to war to reconquer them." (F.O. 58615/13799/13/44.) *cp infra*, pp. 171-2, No 186]

No. 179.

Sir R. Rodd to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 58084/13799/13/44.

(No. 356.) Confidential.

Rome, D. December 22, 1913.

Sir,

R. December 29, 1913.

I have had the honour to report to you fully by telegraph today⁽²⁾ the conversation which I had with the Minister for Foreign Affairs this morning on the subject of the proposals embodied in your telegram circular (No. 449 to Paris) of the 12th instant.⁽³⁾ The somewhat meagre results there recorded is the utmost I have yet been able to extract from him in the course of four interviews since the receipt of your instructions. Nevertheless the impression I have derived is that he is not unfavourable to the general lines of policy suggested, but is apprehensive that an opportunity may be lost, by a too ready acceptance, of acquiring merit with Turkey from whom Italy aspires to concessions. There is an evident desire to gain time and take note of tendencies, and meanwhile the press is being utilized to give currency to the argument that a form of indemnity is due to this country for the prolonged state of war in Cyrenaica and the expenditure entailed by the Italian occupation of the Ægean islands.

Delay is at present being secured on the plea that it is necessary to obtain the views of the other members of the Triple Alliance, who have not yet expressed themselves definitely. Meanwhile the inopportune publication of the substance of these proposals in the Paris "Temps" has led to a communication from Turkey to the effect that she cannot consent to the transfer of the coastal islands to Greece⁽⁴⁾ and this communication Italy, in her zeal for concessions, may plead that it will be difficult for her altogether to disregard. The French version of the proposals as published in the press here, was incomplete, and suggested a note of warning to Italy that the time had come for her to carry out the promised evacuation. Now that it is known that any suggestion of peremptoriness was foreign to the real contents of the communication, the French are accused of having deliberately tried to make mischief between Italy

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe; to Lord Morley.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 81, No. 97.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 76-7, No. 91.]

⁽⁴⁾ [*cp. immediately preceding document, and note* ⁽³⁾.]

and the country whose tact and equity has been so amply demonstrated in the recent negotiations. Altogether the premature publication seems to have risked compromising what was rather a favourable atmosphere for a settlement.

The Turkish communication was probably also responsible for the Marquis di San Giuliano's observations to me this morning as regards the attitude of Germany. Germany was, he understood, apprehensive that insistence on the immediate putting into effect of your proposals might lead to a resumption of hostilities between Turkey and Greece, while at the same time it was hoped in Berlin that with time and negotiation the desired result might in substance eventually be obtained. His exposition of the views of Germany did not carry much conviction, and had I then been aware of the contents of Sir E. Goschen's telegram No. 213 of the 14th instant.⁽²⁾ I should, without betraying any confidence, have known better how to appreciate his account of the probable attitude of Germany. Unfortunately the messenger did not arrive this morning until nearly two hours after he was due, and the sections containing the telegram from Berlin which reports what both the Imperial Chancellor and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs undertook to say at Rome and Vienna only reached me after my interview with the Marquis di San Giuliano.

The mistrust of the Greeks displayed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs was very apparent, though I should perhaps not go so far as Herr von Jagow has done, speaking privately to Sir E. Goschen, and describe his feelings as a hatred almost amounting to mania. Indeed I must do him the justice to say that in referring to their action in Southern Albania, when I spoke of the traditional association of the Suliotes with the cause of Hellenism, he frankly admitted that the Greeks had only done what it was natural they should do and what Italians had also done when they were struggling for their independence. His attitude is perhaps intensified by an effort to suppress misgivings as to how far he has been right in permanently alienating the sympathies of the Greeks, misgivings which are shared by a great many thinking people in this country. It is possible however that to my German and Austrian colleagues he speaks of the Greeks with less reserve than he does to me.

I have, &c.

RENNELL RODD.

(³) [*v. supra*, p. 79, No. 93.]

No. 180.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir L. Mallet.⁽¹⁾

Private.⁽²⁾

My dear Mallet,

Fallodon, December 23, 1913.

I had quite forgotten that I had told you that I did not mean to take any initiative about the Islands.⁽³⁾

This became eventually the only chance of avoiding a catastrophe in South Albania, and as all through the Summer it was only on the understanding that Greece was to have the Islands (except Tenedos and Imbros) that we and others agreed to deprive Greece of Korytza and Stylos, there was no help for it, except to make the proposal that I did. But I am full of compunction at not having told you and explained it all to you beforehand and I realize what this may have added to your difficulties, and if the results are untoward at Constantinople they shall go to my account, not to yours.

The best cards I can give you are that we have on our own initiative put in a condition that the Powers should engage to Turkey that they will keep Greece up to

(¹) [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to the Prime Minister; to Sir A. Nicolson - to Sir E. Crowe.]

(²) [Grey MSS., Vol. 41.]

(³) [*cp. supra*, p. 159, No. 174.]

the mark in the repression of smuggling; and that we have come down on the Turkish side as regards the Islands in Italian occupation; this had not always been our intention.

I have not in my official proposal mentioned the island of Kastelcoritza close to the Turkish coast: I am not sure that it is occupied by either Greeks or Italians. I agree that it should go to Turkey.

As to the German command, my private telegram⁽¹⁾ in answer to your letter of the 17th⁽⁵⁾ and the print will have shown you the part that we have played. It has been anything but unfriendly to Turkey in view of the way I have been pressed by Russia.⁽⁶⁾

The Turks ought now to see that, by holding back as regards definitive British appointments in Armenia we have served [*sic*: ? saved] them from serious consequences. It is hardly too much to say that, had it not been for our caution about Armenian appointments and for our refusal to precipitate a crisis over the German command, the Russians would have been in Armenia by now, and the disintegration of Asiatic Turkey would have begun. For the Germans are not going to fight Russia to defend Turkey, they are going to claim their share if disintegration begins. There is an article in the "Temps" of December 19 on what Turkey owes to the Triple Alliance and to the Entente respectively, which has some good points, though it presses them too far in some cases.

Finance is going to be a great difficulty for the whole of Europe except perhaps ourselves, for we do not live on loans. Paris is the only market and the French themselves and the Russians have the first claim on it; it is a market over exploited already and countries that cannot get along without borrowing from outside may collapse. Whether Turkey really is such a country I am not sure. On paper she is bound to collapse without loans, but Eastern countries can do without money in a way of their own, and the French have invested so much in Turkey that they will strain many points to keep her on her feet.

Yours sincerely,
E. GREY.

⁽⁴⁾ [v. immediately succeeding document.]

⁽⁵⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 158-9, No. 174.]

⁽⁶⁾ [*cp. infra*, pp. 328-423, Chapter LXXXVII, *passim*.]

No. 181.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir L. Mallet.⁽¹⁾

Tel. Private.⁽²⁾

December 24, 1913, 3-35 P.M.

Your private letter of 17th.⁽³⁾ I much regret I overlooked what I had said to you about the Islands as I would have told you beforehand when it became necessary to make some proposal to avoid future trouble. Settlement of S[outh] Albanian frontier being based originally upon leaving Islands to Greece I could not make any proposal more favourable to Turkey than I did.

As to German command Turks ought not to resent our having made an enquiry, the more so as it is so far due to us that nothing more than an enquiry has yet been made and that time has been gained for calm discussion before any peremptory demands were made. This is in the interest of everybody concerned, but especially of Turkey.

A letter follows by next bag.⁽⁴⁾

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram is endorsed as having been sent to the Prime Minister; to Sir A. Nicolson; to Sir E. Crowe.]

⁽²⁾ [Grey MSS., Vol. 41.]

⁽³⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 158-9, No. 174.]

⁽⁴⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen.

F.O. 58605/18799/13/44.

Tel. (No. 431.)

Foreign Office, December 27, 1913. 3.15 P.M.

I hear from a Turkish source that Italy has made a communication to Turkish Government to the effect that she will never evacuate Islands in her occupation if the other Islands are to go to Greece.

In view of the fact that in discussions which took place between Ambassador in London and myself in the earlier part of the year Italy was an active party to understanding that if Korytza and Stilos were given to Albania, Islands in Greek occupation except Tenedos and Imbros should go to Greece⁽¹⁾ this report is hardly credible. But it comes to me from a good source.

It means in effect that Italy is instigating Turkey to upset the understanding on which settlement of S. Albanian frontier was arrived at.

It is also contrary to assurances given by Italy to evacuate Islands in her occupation, assurances to which no condition was attached except that of Treaty of Lausanne, and which were given to us subsequently to understanding about S. Albanian frontier and islands in Greek occupation.⁽²⁾

You should when there is a reasonable opportunity inform German Chancellor and say that while I shall await the reply of Italy and her allies to proposals that I have made, the Italian attitude if confirmed will destroy all prospect of agreement on these questions and of settlement of S. Albanian frontier.

The result would be that Italy and Austria would have to deal with S. Albanian frontier without any agreement between the Powers, while Turkey and Greece would be in the same position as regards the Islands in Greek occupation.

What the attitude of respective Powers and the relations between them would become under these complications it is difficult to forecast. I cannot contemplate the prospect without misgiving.

I can suggest no better way of avoiding these undesirable contingencies than the proposals which I have put forward and which indeed have their origin in existing understandings and assurances of which they were the outcome, and I hope the German Government will do its utmost to remove the difficulties that are now threatening.

MINUTE

Sir E. Grey.

The passages marked in the attached papers entirely confirm your impression that Italy took an active part in framing the resolution at the ambassadors' conference by which the question of Koritza and Stylos was linked with the fate of the islands in Greek occupation.⁽³⁾

This being so, I have had your telegram to Sir E. Goschen sent off.

Sir R. Rodd, in a private letter to me, just received,⁽⁴⁾ suggests that the intimation made to Turkey that Italy would the more readily be got to evacuate the islands in her occupation if the other islands were not left with Greece, was probably conveyed not through any official channel—which would have exposed the Italian gov[ernment] to many risks—but through the unofficial negotiators who recently endeavoured to come to a special agreement with Turkey on the basis of an Italian loan in return for some indirect lien on the islands to be evacuated.

E. A. C.

Dec[ember] 27.

E. G.

(1) [Before this telegram was sent off Sir Edward Grey wrote a minute asking that "the records of any conversations in the spring and summer with the Italian Ambassador should be examined" to make sure that his recollection was correct. The minute below is the result.]

(2) [*cp. Gooch & Temperley, Vol. IX (II), pp. 940-1, No. 1185*]

(3) [*v. ibid.*, pp. 975-6, No. 1226. The "passages marked" include references to documents printed *ibid.*, pp. 844-5, No. 1051; pp. 940-1, No. 1185; pp. 945-6, No. 1190.]

(4) [The letter is not reproduced as it cannot be traced.]

Sir R. Rodd to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Rome, December 27, 1913.

F.O. 58250/13799/13/44.

D. 7-30 P.M.

Tel. (No. 233.)

R. 9-30 P.M.

The Turkish Ambassador has just informed me of the substance of a long conversation with the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs yesterday.

He found him much embarrassed, and believes that he would now be disposed to settle the question of evacuation rapidly, if he could save his face with Italian opinion. This the Ambassador attributes to your proposals having taken Italy by surprise and encourages him to believe that the allies of Italy are urging their general acceptance. The Minister explained to him that there (?) [are] elements in the Italian Chamber which it is difficult to satisfy, and that the question of compensation for the prolongation of occupation was being pressed. The cost, he alleged, including the retention of extra troops with the colours, amounted to 3,000*l.* a day, which seems to be exaggerated. He did not anticipate that Turkey could pay indemnity, but urged the facilitation of evacuation by giving Italy something to show on the credit side, thus bringing the issue round again to concessions.

The Ambassador told me that Turkey was now anxious to recover the islands, and he thought it to their advantage to settle at the cost of such a small blackmail which might fairly be given to a friendly nation. He therefore asked precisely what he was to be asked to recommend. The Minister for Foreign Affairs said that the question of a railway line from Adalia was to be settled with the British Aidin Company; what he wanted from Turkey was a concession for harbour works there. The Ambassador, who had anticipated much larger demands and does not believe in the future of Adalia, said that he had recommended this as a solution if there was no obstacle to the concession, believing that it would also be our interest to accelerate the evacuation, and feeling that, if such a compromise could be arranged, Italy would have far less chance of intriguing in a region where British interests were already established. He had gathered, but was not positive, that the Austrian demand, which had been for a small 25-kilom[etre] line, had been dropped at the instance of Italy.

(Secret.)

His observations on Italian methods gave me an opportunity to ask whether he had any reason to believe that Italy had given Turkey encouragement to endeavour to recover any other islands from the Greeks. He said that he could positively affirm that there had been such encouragement. This was apparent six weeks ago.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Berlin (as No. 434); to St. Petersburg (as No. 813); to Vienna (as No. 347); to Constantinople (as No. 393); to Paris, by bag.]

Sir M. de Bunsen to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Vienna, December 28, 1913.

F.O. 58019/13799/13/44.

D. 8-16 P.M.

Tel. (No. 204.)

R. 9-30 P.M.

Ægean Islands.

The Turkish Ambassador gave me to-day his views on your proposals.⁽²⁾ If accepted as they stand, Turkey would be compelled by her vital interests in Asia Minor

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Constantinople (as No. 594).]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 76-7, No. 91.]

to resume by force possession of the islands proposed to be assigned to Greece. The ensuing conflict with Greece would inevitably bring Bulgaria into the field as the ally of Turkey. Servia would also become involved. Albania would invade Epirus. The Great Powers might not again be able to keep the peace among themselves. Bulgaria would keep Roumania quiet by ceding to her the remainder of the quadrilateral; Bulgaria would take Cavalla, or as much of Servia as she could. In short, the Balkans would be again in a blaze.

Turkey hoped that some alternative settlement might be put forward on the lines advocated by Lucien Wolf in the "Graphic" of 11th October, according to which the Rhodes group would fall to Greece and all the islands dominating the coast of Asia Minor would revert to Turkey.

When I reminded him that Turkey had agreed to leave the organisation question in the hands of the Powers, he said that her consent had been made conditional on her vital interests being respected.

As the Turkish Ambassador has quite recently met at Vienna the Turkish Ambassador at Berlin and the Turkish Minister of Finance, it is probable that these views are the result of the conversation of these gentlemen. The Turkish Ambassador thought that Italy would be glad to see renewal of the war, but that Germany, and probably Austria-Hungary, were in a peaceful mood. Unfortunately in the Mediterranean the Triple Alliance was guided by Italian policy.

The Turkish Ambassador has also spoken at length to the French Ambassador in the above sense.

MINUTE.

The objection to the proposal of the Turkish Ambassador is of course that Italy will not agree to it.

E. G.

No. 185.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 365/365/14/44.

(No. 1048.) Confidential.

Constantinople, D. December 29, 1913.

R. January 5, 1914.

Sir,

Colonel Jemal Bey, whose appointment as Minister of Public Works I am reporting in a separate despatch,⁽²⁾ called upon me this morning. He had dined with me on the occasion of an official dinner which I had given to the Grand Vizier and he had then asked whether he might come and see me to explain his views on matters of importance to England and Turkey.

I was therefore expecting Jemal Bey's visit and had thought that he was desirous of speaking to me about some question such as the Smyrna-Aidin Railway or matters of that kind. But this was not the real object of his visit though he touched upon it in connection with the question of Italian claims for concession in the neighbourhood of Adalia.

I need not repeat what I reported (in my telegram No. 643 of today)⁽³⁾ was his attitude on the subject of Italian Rail and Port concessions in this province.

Italy had, he said, openly spoken of her wish and right to have a sphere of influence in Turkey, and he, Jemal Bey, would never admit such a right. "Zones of work" foreign countries might have, but not of political influence. He could never forget moreover that Italy was primarily the author of all Turkey's recent misfortunes.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King.]

⁽²⁾ [Sir L. Mallet's despatch (No. 1044), D. December 30, 1913, R. January 5, 1914, gave details of the career and personality of Jemal Bey. (F.O. 361/361/14/44.)]

⁽³⁾ [Sir L. Mallet's telegram (No. 643) of December 29, 1913, D. 9.20 P.M., R. 10 P.M., is not reproduced as the contents are sufficiently indicated above. (F.O. 58508/39484/13/44.)]

I said that he was probably aware of the pro-memoria which I had left with the Grand Vizier on the position of the Smyrna-Aidin Railway,⁽¹⁾ and of my request that the Turkish Government would inform me if any application was made by the Italian Government or any negotiations undertaken.

Colonel Jemal Bey said that he realised what was our position but did not pursue the subject.

He went on to speak of the position of the Islands and, in this connection, he said that, rather than give up to Italy one of the islands now in her occupation he would see the Empire destroyed. I said that, by your proposal, all these islands would revert to Turkish Sovereignty and that this seemed to be of great advantage to Turkey and should prove a relief from their embarrassment. He did not reply but passed to the question of the islands now occupied by Greece.

I enquired whether, if the proposal, which it was convenient to call British but which was in reality a résumé of the views of the Ambassadors' conferences in London, was adopted, Turkey would in the long run be the loser. In view of the fact that the islands were inhabited by Greeks in vast majority would they not always be a source of weakness to the Ottoman Government? Jemal Bey replied that he would never consent to the islands lying off the coast passing permanently into Greek hands. These islands were practically part of the mainland, they were inhabited by a peaceful commercial community who would be perfectly contented under Turkish rule. If the Greeks owned them, they would become the centre of intrigues with the mainland and be a constant source of dispute. Should the Powers commit the injustice of giving them to Greece, there would never be permanent peace, for Turkey would not rest till she got them back.

Colonel Jemal said that he personally would be ready to give the largest autonomy to all the islands, which might be grouped together, but they must be placed under the sovereignty of the Sultan.

He smilingly added that he would not object to European Inspectors General.

I pointed out that the views held by His Majesty's Government when I was in London were in opposition to a policy of military and naval adventure on the part of Turkey and that they hoped that the Government would devote themselves to the regeneration of their great Asiatic possessions, to the improvement of the condition of the people and to the development of their economic resources, a task which was more worthy of a statesman than the pursuit of ambitions of conquest, and one which would gain them the sympathy of Europe and especially of Great Britain. Colonel Jemal replied that the security of the country was the first consideration and he said that Turkey without Adrianople and without the islands was like a room with doors open to robbers and malefactors. I expressed a doubt whether the financial resources of Turkey would stand the strain of keeping up a fleet which I understood it was intended to create in addition to an adequate army, but Colonel Jemal Bey replied that the existence of Turkey depended on her ability to defend herself from attack—this lesson they had learnt from the war when everyone was against Turkey—Greece had a fleet stronger than Turkey at present but this should not last, for the Government were determined to be stronger at sea than Greece. Would not this be a great advantage to Great Britain for Turkey's fleet would always fight on her side? They would help to maintain the balance of power in the Mediterranean against the growing power of Italy. He was a strong partisan of France and England.

I said that I had heard rumours that they contemplated the purchase of a large capital ship and I doubted whether the Turkish navy would be able at present to make use of such a vessel—Could they man her and where was the dock into which she could go for repairs?

I expressed the view that Turkey was attempting too much and was in too great a hurry. Let them proceed slowly and devote themselves for the present to education and reform of the Administration. When they had worked hard at this for a few

(¹) [Not reproduced.]

years, they would find themselves much stronger and they would have a solid basis on which to build. Might they not arouse the jealousy of one Power in particular by proceeding too quickly in the matter of the fleet? Would it not be more prudent to proceed with caution in the matter?

Jemal at once enquired whether England had not lent them a Naval Commander and other officers and was not now on the point of lending them more naval experts in order to help them to create a good fleet. Was not England serious in the matter?

The Turkish Government had deeply felt the refusal of His Majesty's Government to lend them Inspectors General and other officials for the Armenian provinces. I had spoken of reforms and he could assure me that he was firmly resolved to introduce them but he wanted our help. I said that I was at the Foreign Office at the time of the Turkish application and had had the advantage of discussing the question with you on more than one occasion. I could therefore explain to him exactly what your reasons were for first consenting to lend officials and afterwards in modifying your assent—for I reminded him that you had not refused, but had only stipulated that pending the settlement of reforms no permanent appointment should be made.

I said that your assent in the first instance was a proof of your sincere desire to help Turkey and that the subsequent modification of view was due entirely to a desire not to cause Turkey embarrassment from another Power who perhaps naturally felt that her interest in the Armenian populations owing to the presence of 2,000,000 Armenians in the Caucasus gave her the right to be consulted in regard to the limitrophe provinces. Colonel Jemal Bey did not admit that it was likely that the Russian Government would really have made any difficulty had His Majesty's Government insisted on maintaining their point of view. In the case of the German Military Mission⁽⁵⁾ the Russian Government had made a great outcry but the question was now settled and the Russians had done nothing but threaten. I did not take this up for it appeared that Colonel Jemal was unaware of the confidential negotiations, now on foot, for a retreat on the part of Germany on this very question.

Colonel Jemal went on to say that Turkey could not now yield on the question of the Mission. He was not a member of the Government when the decision was taken to give the German Government the command of the First Army Corps and he would not himself have favoured it, because he knew from his own experience that no one man could possibly undertake the executive command of the Corps and at the same time devote himself to its reorganisation. Now however they could not yield for that would be admitting the intervention of foreign Powers in their internal concerns.

I advised Colonel Jemal not to be so uncompromising. Sometimes it was necessary in the best interests of one's country to submit to what seemed hard conditions, and sacrifices of 'amour propre' were the least of the sacrifices that statesmen were called upon to make in the interests of their country.

This discussion respecting the mission was in the nature of a digression and Jemal Bey returned to the question of England and Russia and his regret that England could not have seen her way to insist on the loan of Officials.

I thought it was right to put our position quite plainly before Jemal Bey and I asked him whether he had ever considered the European situation as a whole and the rôle which Great Britain had always played in maintaining the balance of power in Europe. For reasons with which he was familiar Great Britain found herself diplomatically on the side of France and Russia at the present time and Turkey must always remember that His Majesty's Government had first to consider how far her general interests and relations with France and Russia were affected by questions of the kind that we had just been discussing. His Majesty's Government had sometimes to make sacrifices in view of larger interests and they would be very loth to put Turkey into a position from which it would not be possible for Great Britain to extricate them. As Lord Salisbury had said on one occasion, "Great Britain could not send a navy across the Taurus."

(5) [*v. infra*, pp. 338-423, Chapter LXXXVII, *passim*.]

Jemal Bey quite recognised this; but did not Russia attach equal importance to England's friendship which was necessary to her pending the consolidation of her position in the Far East? He pleaded strongly and earnestly with me to ask His Majesty's Government to consider whether it would not be possible to take rather a less negative line with Turkey than they had done in the past two years.

I have tried to give a faithful account of our conversation. It derives importance from the position and character of Jemal Bey.

I do not think my remarks made any impression at all upon his mind but we are on very friendly terms and he did not resent my frankness.

I have, &c.

LOUIS MALLET.

MINUTE.

Entirely approve language.

H. N.

Jan[uary] 6, 1914.

J. D. G.

E. A. C.

A. N.

F. G.

No. 186.

Communication from Tewfik Pasha.

London, D. December 30, 1913.

R. December 31, 1913.

F.O. 58785/13799/13/44.

L'Ambassadeur de Turquie présente ses compliments à Sir E. Grey, et a l'honneur de rappeler à Son Excellence que dès le début des négociations de paix qui ont abouti au Traité de Londres, le Gouvernement Impérial Ottoman, tant par la voix de ses délégués que par la voie diplomatique avait exprimé ses réserves formelles au sujet de la solution éventuelle de la question des Iles de la Mer Egée détenues par la Grèce, question dont l'examen avait été réservé aux Grandes Puissances médiatrices.

Ces réserves avaient été faites pour des considérations qui ne pouvaient échapper à la vigilance d'aucun Gouvernement soucieux des intérêts du pays et de la défense nationale, et étaient fondées, alors comme aujourd'hui, sur la proximité immédiate de certaines Iles occupées par la Grèce, comme Mytilène, Lemnos, Chio, Imbros, Ténédos et autres, des côtes asiatiques de l'Empire Ottoman et du Détroit des Dardanelles.

En dehors de ces considérations stratégiques, il y aurait aussi à relever les innombrables et continuelles difficultés qui résulteraient de l'annexion, même subordonnée à des garanties, de ces Iles au Royaume Hellénique: Par leur proximité immédiate des côtes de l'Asie naîtrait incontestablement une contrebande continue d'armes avec les localités riveraines de la Turquie; les éléments perturbateurs de l'ordre public trouveraient en même temps un champ libre et facile à une propagande en faveur de l'hellénisme parmi les nombreuses populations grecques de l'Empire Ottoman, dont la grande majorité habite les villes maritimes de la Turquie d'Asie, sans compter les criminels de droit commun qui poursuivis en territoire Ottoman, trouveraient aisément et très facilement un asile dans ces Iles.

A ces arguments basés sur le voisinage immédiat des côtes asiatiques, il y a également lieu de relever l'obligation où se trouverait la Sublime Porte, dans le cas de la non restitution des Iles déjà citées, de renforcer la défense des Dardanelles et de prendre des mesures militaires exceptionnelles qui pourraient dans leur application porter entrave et créer des obstacles sérieux au commerce international et à la navigation étrangère.

C'est pourquoi, si on venait malgré ces réserves formelles et expresses, à adopter une décision contraire à ce point de vue, le Gouvernement Impérial Ottoman se verrait malheureusement dans l'obligation légitime d'employer toute son activité et d'user de tous les moyens en son pouvoir, pour chercher à reprendre à la Grèce les Iles qui lui sont indispensables pour la sécurité et la sauvegarde de son Empire asiatique.

A cette occasion le Gouvernement Impérial Ottoman ne peut s'empêcher, non plus, de relever encore une fois que les Iles détenues provisoirement par l'Italie et dont l'occupation par cette dernière Puissance, se trouve être antérieure à la crise balkanique, ne sauraient en aucun cas être assimilées à celles qui sont actuellement occupées par la Grèce, ni soumises à une discussion en même temps que ces dernières. La Sublime Porte ne pourrait, partant, admettre tout autre arrangement que celui de la restitution pure et simple par l'Italie des Iles détenues par elle et soumises aux stipulations du Traité de Lausanne; tout en se réservant de faire bénéficier leurs populations des dispositions du Firman Impérial faisant partie dudit Traité.

Il n'y a donc pas lieu dans ces conditions d'envisager l'octroi d'un régime autonome à ces Iles, étant donné que leur sort se trouve être déjà défini et ne peut donner lieu à aucune nouvelle discussion. D'autre part, s'il est vrai qu'il y ait une tendance à vouloir établir une certaine corrélation entre la question des Iles de la Mer Egée en général et celle de la délimitation de la frontière méridionale de l'Albanie, il y aurait lieu de relever que dans l'esprit du Gouvernement Impérial Ottoman ces deux questions sont absolument distinctes et qu'il ne tient nullement à céder ses droits sur les Iles, établis et fixés par un Traité, au profit de tiers qui auraient intérêt à trouver une certaine corrélation entre la question des Iles proprement dite et le règlement de la frontière albanaise.

Londres, le 30 Décembre 1913.

MINUTES.

Tewfik Pasha came to speak to me about this today. He said the present protest had been made against his own advice. He had urged that there was no proposal before the Turkish gov[ernment] The latter had explicitly left the decision of the fate of the islands in the hands of the Powers,⁽¹⁾ and they could therefore properly do or say nothing until the Powers approached them on the subject.

I said that was undoubtedly good advice and it was a great pity the Porte had not followed it. Since the protest had now been made, it would of course be submitted to Sir E. Grey, but I could tell H[is] H[ighness] at once that H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] had cause to be considerably surprised at such a communication. After the solemn engagements subscribed by the Turkish government it was impossible for Sir E. Grey to foresee that they would now claim entirely to repudiate those engagements. Nothing could be more clear than the definite and unconditional acceptance by the Turkish government of the principle that the fate of all the islands was to be decided by the 6 Great Powers. I reminded him of:

(1) Article 5 of the treaty of peace signed by the Turkish plenipotentiaries, and those of the three Allies, in London on May 30th, 1913⁽²⁾

(2) Article 15 of the treaty of peace concluded between Turkey and Greece at Athens on November 1st, 1913.⁽³⁾

(3) The formal Note sent by the Porte on April 1st, 1913, in answer to the joint note addressed to them by the six ambassadors on March 31st, 1913.⁽⁴⁾

In view of the formal and unconditional undertaking embodied in the above 3 documents, it was impossible to contend that the Great Powers were in any way fettered in making their decision or that such decision could be questioned in good faith.

Tewfik Pasha, whose tone was most friendly, intimated that personally he felt he had no arguments to oppose to what I had said.

(1) [v. Gooch & Temperley, Vol. IX (II), p. 545, No. 668, and note (2).]

(2) [v. Gooch & Temperley, Vol IX (II), p. 1050, App. III.]

(3) [v. B.F.S.P., Vol. 107, pp. 893-902; the text of Article XV of the treaty is as follows:—

“Les deux hautes parties contractantes s'engagent à maintenir, en ce qui les concerne, les dispositions du Traité de Londres du 30 mai, 1913, y compris les stipulations de l'article V dudit traité.”]

(4) [v. Gooch & Temperley, Vol IX (II), p. 631, No. 775.]

It will perhaps be better to return no written answer for the present to the Turkish note. If, as I still hope, the Powers come to an agreement before long as to the islands, they will have to communicate their decision presumably, in a fresh collective note to the Porte, to be presented by the 6 ambassadors at Constantinople. In such a note the above arguments would find their appropriate place

E. A. C
Jan[uary] 2
E G.

Yes: the Turkish protest cannot be dealt [with] by individual Powers separately.

No. 187.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir L. Mallet.

F.O. 58650/13799/13/44.

(No. 2.) Very confidential.

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 1, 1914.

The Turkish Ambassador called on the 23rd ultimo to ask whether His Majesty's Government had as yet received the reply of the Powers to their proposal respecting the fate of the Aegean Islands.

Sir E. Crowe, who received His Excellency, explained to him that so far as the Ottoman Government were concerned there would be no question of a "proposal" until the six Great Powers had come to a conclusion among themselves.

In the course of a conversation which was most friendly, Sir E. Crowe explained the views of His Majesty's Government on the lines indicated in my telegram No. 587 of the 20th ultimo to your Excellency.⁽¹⁾

Tewfik Pasha seemed to consider the suggestions and arguments put forward as quite reasonable, and merely said the difficulty of the Turkish Government was partly strategical and partly one of revenue and commerce. They did not wish to be involved in further heavy expenditure for defence, such as would be necessitated by the islands close to the Asiatic mainland and near the Dardanelles being in Greek hands, and they were afraid of a further extension of the system of smuggling arms and of other contraband traffic which already gave so much trouble at Samos.

Sir E. Crowe explained that on both these points His Majesty's Government had carefully stipulated that satisfaction must be given to Turkey and Tewfik Pasha said that this was important.

His Excellency then went on to speak of Italy and complained of her continuing to make ever fresh conditions for her evacuation of the islands now in her occupation. Her last communication was to the effect that Italy would never evacuate those islands if the other islands were to go to Greece, arguing that when she agreed at Lausanne to evacuate on certain conditions, the strategic situation was quite different from what it was now. In present circumstances Italy must guard against a Greek aggressive policy.

I am, &c.
E. GREY.

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 161, No. 177.]

No. 188.

Sir M. de Bunsen to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 484/98/14/44.

(No. 1.) Confidential.

Sir,

Vienna, D. January 1, 1914.

R. January 5, 1914.

In all conversations I have had in Vienna concerning the proposed settlement of the Islands question, expression has been given to the feeling that the attitude of Turkey constitutes a main difficulty in the way of agreement between the Powers.

Hilmi Pasha has had the goodness to give me his views on the subject. As his name carries some authority, I may perhaps be permitted to amplify a little the telegram (no. 204 of the 28th ultimo)⁽¹⁾ in which I have already had the honour to report his remarks in outline. After producing a copy of the "Graphic" of October 11th, which contains a map showing the distribution of the islands suggested by Mr. Lucien Wolf, His Excellency said that some such arrangement would give satisfaction to Turkey—namely one by which Samothrace, Imbros, Tenedos, Lemnos, Mitylene and Chios would all fall to Turkey, while from Samos southwards the islands, except I think Kos, might all be assigned to Greece. Turkey, he said, had an altogether secondary interest in the southern group, and he would personally advocate its surrender to Greece, even in the event of the Powers uniting to compel Turkey by force to accept Greek ownership of Mitylene and Chios. Mitylene and Chios would be a serious danger to Turkey if left in Greek hands. The Greeks could easily transport from Mitylene to the coast of Asia Minor a force which would threaten from the rear the Asiatic fortifications of the Dardanelles. From Chios they could threaten the approaches to Smyrna. I reminded the Turkish Ambassador that it was proposed to neutralise the islands to be left to Greece, and to guarantee the non-erection upon them of military works. Their pacific character would thus be assured. His Excellency had no confidence in the efficacy of such restraints upon the hostile spirit of the Greeks. The fulfilment of the plan to which publicity had been given by the Press would immediately revive Turkish animosity against Greece in its most warlike form. Turkey would forcibly capture from the Greeks the islands she held to be essential to the security of Asia Minor. If she could not do so at once, she would wait six months or a year, but no long period could elapse before she would make the attempt, and she would soon be strong enough at sea to ensure success. This of course meant war with Greece. Naturally Bulgaria would take the opportunity to seize Cavalla if she could. Servia would be drawn, no doubt, into the conflict, and the Albanian tribes would rise against Servia and Greece. The worst experiences of the Balkan Peninsula would assuredly be renewed, and it was almost too much to hope that one or more of the Great Powers would not become involved in the fray.

Monsieur Dumaine, the French Ambassador, has received a similar declaration from Hilmi Pasha, and when he remarked that French financial aid would certainly not be forthcoming to enable Turkey to wage war with Greece, Hilmi Pasha replied that in that case she would get the money she wanted, by hook or by crook, from other quarters.

Hilmi Pasha doubts whether Italy is in any way entitled to compensation in exchange for fulfilment of her Treaty obligation to hand over the Dodecanese to Turkey. Accounts between the two countries were balanced at Lausanne, and Italy had since paid over to Turkey 50 millions of francs in accordance with one of the Articles (presumably Article X) of the Lausanne Treaty.⁽²⁾ If Italy claimed compensation on account of expenses incurred in the islands in consequence of her having been compelled to hold them for a longer period than was at first expected, His Excellency said she should be required to furnish a statement showing not only the nature and extent of those expenses, but also the amount of revenue she had derived from the islands. The difference would not be considerable, and might be assessed by arbitration.

In the settlement of the Islands question Hilmi Pasha expects that the Italian point of view, which will probably be found to be hostile to the development of Greek naval power in the Ægean Sea, will receive a good deal of support from Germany and Austria-Hungary. He believes that a general understanding exists between the Powers of the Triple Alliance in virtue of which each Power receives the support of the other two in the region in which it is principally interested. In the case of Italy that region

(1) [v. *supra*, pp. 167–8, No. 184.]

(2) [v. *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (I), p. 442, No. 466, *encl.*]

is the Mediterranean Sea; in the case of Germany, Asia Minor; in the case of Austria-Hungary, the Balkans.

Hilmi Pasha claims that, though Turkey agreed that the settlement of the question of the Islands should be left to the Great Powers, she would be justified in resisting any settlement which disregarded her vital interests, and he states that she made full reservations on this point at the time when she signified to the Powers her acceptance of the arrangement in question.

I have already reported by telegraph⁽³⁾ that Hilmi Pasha left on the 29th instant at the Ballplatz a written protest against any settlement founded on the assignment of Mitylene and Chios to Greece.

I asked Hilmi Pasha whether he did not think Roumania would intervene to prevent a fresh rearrangement of the Balkan States as the result of a Turkish War with Greece. He said Bulgaria would probably be able to keep Roumania quiet by ceding to her another strip of Bulgarian territory, including Rustchuk, Shumla and Varna. The Servian Minister, Monsieur Jovanovich, however, with whom I have had one or two conversations lately, believes that Bulgaria is too much exhausted to go to war again, on the faint chance of getting back Cavalla, and even of wresting from Servia a portion of the territories annexed by that country by virtue of the Treaty of Bucharest. Monsieur Jovanovich does not think Bulgaria would be so foolish as to give up more fortresses to Roumania. Her prospect of recovering territory from Greece and Servia would be very problematical. Servia would be compelled by her defensive alliance with Greece to stand by the latter country.

Monsieur de Tchirschky, the German Ambassador, speaks appreciatively of your proposals, though he always says their realisation, in whatever form it may prove possible, will take a long time. Meanwhile he is not prepared to suggest any amendments to them. He called a few days ago to tell me he had just received a letter from Monsieur de Jagow whose object, like yours, was to assist, in any way he could, to prevent a Turkish war against Greece. Monsieur de Jagow had no present suggestion to make.

I have, &c.

MAURICE DE BUNSEN.

(³) [Sir M. de Bunsen's telegram (No. 205) of December 29, 1913, D. 8.25 P.M., R. 11 P.M., is not reproduced as the contents are sufficiently indicated above. (F.O. 58510/13799/13/44.)]

No. 189.

M. Gennadius to Sir E. Crowe.

F.O. 160/98/14/44.

London, D. January 1, 1914.

Dear Sir Eyre Crowe,

R. January 2, 1914.

I beg leave to enclose, as suggested, a copy of the telegram which I had the honour to communicate to you this afternoon.

In a subsequent despatch on the same subject, telegraphed to the Greek Legation at Berlin, M. Panas added:—

“Je tiens à attirer votre attention que dans la séance du 5 août dernier des Ambassadeurs à Londres,⁽¹⁾ le Prince Lichnowski déclara que l'Allemagne adhère aux cinq points proposés par Sir Edward Grey, dont le troisième, concernant les îles occupées par nous, est ainsi conçu: ‘La Grèce restera, sous certaines conditions de neutralité, en possession des îles habitées en majorité par une population grecque, et

(¹) [*v. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II), pp. 954–6, No. 1202.]

occupées actuellement par les forces helléniques, à l'exception de Ténédos, Imbros et Thasos.'''

The latter island, of course, forms an integral part, to all intents and purposes, of Kavalla, which is now Greek territory.

Yours sincerely,
J. GENNADIUS.

Enclosure in No. 189.

Telegram received by Greek Legation in London.

Selon nos informations la S[ublime] P[orte] aurait déclaré au Cabinet de Paris qu'elle ne saurait acquiescer à la proposition anglaise, et tâcherait de toute manière reprendre les îles occupées par nous. Or, non seulement par l'article V du Traité de Londres⁽²⁾ le Sultan et les Alliés déclarèrent confier aux Souverains des six Grandes Puissances le soin de statuer sur le sort de toutes les îles Ottomanes de la Mer Égée, l'île de Crète exceptée, mais encore, par la Convention d'Athènes, qui a confirmé le Traité de Londres, la Grèce et la Turquie, en prenant l'engagement de maintenir le dit traité, ont spécialement mentionné l'article V concernant les îles.

La S[ublime] Porte, paraissant aujourd'hui vouloir se soustraire à ses engagements formels, le Gouvernement Royal croit devoir attirer à ce sujet l'attention des Grandes Puissances, et invoquer auprès d'elles le fait que la question des îles occupées par la Grèce ayant fait l'objet des délibérations des Ambassadeurs à Londres dans leur séance du 5 Août dernier,⁽³⁾ et n'ayant soulevé aucune objection, elle a été résolue d'une façon définitive avec la réserve seule de condition de neutralité et à l'exclusion des îles de Ténédos et Imbros.

En prenant vis-à-vis des Grandes Puissances, par le Traité de Londres, l'engagement de se remettre à Elles pour le sort des îles et la fixation de la frontière sud de l'Albanie, la Grèce considèrerait, et considère toujours, ces deux questions connexes, qu'on ne saurait solutionner qu'ensemble, et il est de son devoir de faire part au Gouvernement, auprès duquel vous êtes accrédité, de son sentiment à ce sujet, qui acquiert d'autant plus d'importance que les Grandes Puissances, par leur déclaration dans la séance du 5 Août, reconnurent elles-mêmes sans restriction la connexité des deux questions. Veuillez entretenir dans ce sens son Excellence le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères.

PANAS.

Athènes, le 26 décembre 1913.

MINUTES.

When M. Gennadius handed to me the enclosed telegram from his government, I said that H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] adhered to their view that the two questions were connected and should be treated together. I told him that there was nothing to show that this was not equally the view of the other Powers. They had now given their answer to the first part of our proposal, but the answer on the second part was only delayed for a very short time, simply because it was not yet quite ready. We had every reason to hope it would reach us soon and would be satisfactory.

M Gennadius then referred to the Turkish protest to the Powers, of which he had full knowledge, and to the threat openly made at Constantinople that Turkey would seize Chios and Mitylene. It was no doubt that the purchase of the Brazilian ship⁽⁴⁾ was part of this programme. If it became quite clear that Turkey would proceed to warlike acts, the Greek government would possibly find that they could not afford to wait passively till the blow fell. They might on their part take steps to counteract the Turkish menace.

I merely said that these were entirely hypothetical contingencies at present. It remained to be seen whether Turkey would break its engagements to the Powers if the latter notified to her their unanimous decision in a matter which she had solemnly agreed to leave in their hands

(2) [v. Gooch & Temperley, Vol. IX (II), p. 1050, App. III.]

(3) [v. Gooch & Temperley, Vol. IX (II), pp. 954-6, No. 1202.]

(4) [The correspondence on the subject of the purchase of this battle-ship has not been included for reasons of space (F.O. 342/115/14/44)]

I made use of the arguments in the present Greek communication, when talking to Tewfik Pasha to-day (see 58785/13.)⁽⁵⁾

I did not think it worth while to raise with M. Gennadius the question how his gov[ernmen]t could quote to us the proceedings at the Ambassadors' conferences, which were confidential.

E. A. C.

Jan[uary] 2.

The proceedings at the Meeting of Ambassadors were not communicated to Greece. They constitute Agreements between the Powers, but no obligation on the part of the Powers towards anyone else, except when formally and officially communicated on behalf of the Powers.

For instance the Powers would be entitled by agreement between themselves to alter the decision about the Islands without consulting Greece or Turkey.

E. G.

(⁵) [*cp. supra*, pp. 172-3, No. 186, *min.*]

No. 190.

Sir R. Rodd to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 1074/98/14/44.

(No. 1.) Confidential.

Rome, D. January 2, 1914.

Sir:—

R. January 9, 1914.

My Russian colleague, whose temperament impels him to rush in where others venture more warily, tells me that, when seeing the Minister for Foreign Affairs the day before yesterday, he had observed to His Excellency that, speaking quite personally and unofficially, he was anxious to know how it could be claimed that there was no connection between the question of the southern frontier of Albania and the future disposal of the Ægean islands, because he had always understood that during the discussions in London the Italian Ambassador had accepted the view that if the frontier was settled in the manner desired by Italy, she would be ready to see the islands in Italian occupation go to Greece.⁽¹⁾ The Minister protested that never for a moment had this been understood, and if the Italian Ambassador had accepted such a condition he had certainly exceeded his instructions. Whereupon the Russian Ambassador observed that if he was to be disavowed it should have been done at the time and not so many months afterwards, but the question had now only a historic interest as the proposals which had since been put forward, and had been accepted by Russia, contemplated the restoration of those islands to Turkey. At any rate, he continued, there was a distinct understanding that if the frontier defined by Italy was agreed to, the islands actually occupied by the Greeks should be retained by them. To this the Minister for Foreign Affairs replied that at most there might have been a sort of half-engagement, and that it was not material now to enter into this question as the formal proposal for the disposition of the islands was under consideration. The Russian Ambassador observed that half-engagements were unknown in diplomatic negotiation, and that he might say, speaking now in his official capacity, that the Russian Government considered that the engagement was formal and definite. The Marquis di San Giuliano was, he said, evidently much embarrassed to know what to say.

When I saw His Excellency yesterday I did not approach this matter quite so uncompromisingly as my Russian colleague, but contented myself with asking why the Italian press and even the semi-official press was so concerned to explain to the public that the two issues had been completely separated, as though this constituted a sort of diplomatic success. I found it the more difficult to understand inasmuch as the retention of the islands by Greece had been laid down as a condition for the

(¹) [*v. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II), pp. 954-6, No. 1202.]

reduction of the Greek claims north of Epirus. The Marquis di San Giuliano rather evaded the question by protesting that he had done all he could to prevent the newspapers from discussing the matter, but that he had not been able to restrain even the semi-official "Tribuna" from dealing with a subject upon which it was contended by the editor public opinion was so greatly excited. As the whole issue was likely to be dealt with in a few days' time and he had every hope that the decision would be satisfactory, it really would not serve any practical end to go into the question of whether or no, or of how far there had been an engagement on the subject.

I did not pursue the matter further as, if the object in view is to be attained, it appears immaterial whether or no the Italian Government may derive some minor satisfaction from allowing it to be supposed that they have been successful in upholding the point that the two questions should be dealt with independently. It is, however, evident that they wish Italian public opinion to be thus impressed.

It is of course always possible that they hope, if they are able to claim that an absence of connection between the two issues has now been established and tacitly admitted, that there may be opportunity for bargaining about individual islands and acquiring merit with Turkey, which would not have been possible if they had recognized that they were already definitely committed to a solution in favour of Greece. I trust this may not be so, but should it prove to be the case, occasion might arise to draw attention to the proposal recorded in the last paragraph but one of your despatch No. 192 of the 28th July last,⁽²⁾ and to the clear statement of the conditions on which instructions to the international commission for the delimitation of the Albanian frontier would depend, recorded in your despatch No. 196 of the 31st July.⁽³⁾

I have, &c.

RENNELL RODD.

MINUTE

The plain speaking of the Russian Ambassador is refreshing.⁽⁴⁾

A. N.
E. G.

⁽²⁾ [*v. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II), pp. 940-1, No. 1185.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II), pp. 945-6, No. 1190, and note ⁽¹⁾.]

⁽⁴⁾ [*cp. infra*, pp. 178-9, No. 192; pp. 183-4, No. 198]

No. 191.

Sir R. Rodd to Sir Edward Grey.

Rome, January 4, 1914.

F.O. 946/98/14/44.

D. 11.25 A.M.

Tel. (No. 2.)

R. 12.30 P.M.

German Ambassador told me confidentially last night that the reply to your proposals regarding islands was being drafted in Berlin.⁽¹⁾ Retention by Greece of islands occupied by her would be agreed to. There was a difficulty as regards islands occupied by Italy in fixing a date for their surrender to Turkey.

⁽¹⁾ [*cp. infra*, p. 190, No. 203.]

No. 192.

Communication from M. de Etter.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 660/98/14/44.

Russian Embassy, London, January 5, 1914.

D'après des renseignements Turquie consentirait à :

- 1) *Restitution* à Turquie des 4 îles défendant l'entrée des Dardanelles
- 2) des îles riverains de l'Asie—Samos compris.

⁽¹⁾ [For Sir E. Crowe's account of his conversation with M. de Etter on January 5, *v. infra*, pp. 183-4, No. 198.]

3) des Certaines îles actuellement occupées par l'Italie.

Nos considérations :

- 1) Chios et Mitilène devraient rester à la Grèce (Au point de vue économique aucune île occupée par l'Italie ne peut être comparée à ces deux îles).
- 2) Aucune raison de restituer Samos aux turcs.
- 3) Un arrangement quelconque en vue de laisser aux turcs Lemnos et Samothrace (sûrement compris parmi les 4 îles), vue leur importance stratégique—pour maintenir liberté de navigation de les détroits,—sur la base de cession à la Grèce d'autres îles,—pourrait être pris en considération selon Mr. Sazonoff.
- 4) Toutes autres prétentions turques devraient certainement être écartées.

No. 193.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Constantinople, January 6, 1914.

F.O. 754/98/14/44.

Tel. (No. 9.)

D. 12.10 P.M.

R. 2.45 P.M.

I cannot say what the ultimate effect of Enver Bey's appointment will be.⁽²⁾ There is however no prima facie disadvantage in younger men taking office.

His nomination will not be popular with part of the army and may tend to perpetuate the two factions but his name is prominent in Moslem world.

He will be more agreeable to the German Government than Djemal Bey who is too independent. It is said that the latter may become Minister of Marine and other younger men are mentioned for other Ministries.

I see no reason to take alarmist view but as I have reported the Turkish Government consider the question of islands a vital one.

The Grand Vizier who had just seen Italian Ambassador asked me to tell you that of course if you insisted on alienation of Mitylene and Chios and if France and England sent their fleets to enforce this compromise Government would have to yield but they would yield to force alone. They must have those islands and Dodecanese.

He spoke despondently and his language was not meant as a threat. I think apart from sentimental considerations economic and geographical reasons make Turkish claim reasonable. If war ensued at any future time one of the objects of His Majesty's Government's proposal would be defeated.

As I have reported men at present in power so far as my short experience of them goes are capable and earnestly bent on the regeneration of Turkey.

They have great difficulties both internal and external but should they have the political support of the Triple Alliance their position will be strong because it would seem that in the end France must supply them with money in order to save French investors who have about one hundred and fifty million pounds invested in Turkey.

It is premature to set aside possibility of Turkey making some progress and it is possible that she may become a more important factor in European Equilibrium than has seemed likely recently

Our position here has undoubtedly been much shaken by His Majesty's Government's lead in Adrianople and islands questions but our moral support is still of some importance to the Turkish Government in view of respect which is still felt for us amongst the masses. The situation moreover changes rapidly in this country. I should not be surprised if pro-English views expressed by Djemal Bey as reported in my despatch No. 1048 of Dec[ember] 29 are sincere.⁽³⁾

⁽¹⁾ [A copy of the last two paragraphs of this telegram was sent to the Admiralty.]

⁽²⁾ [Enver Bey succeeded Izzet Pasha as Minister for War early in January 1914.]

⁽³⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 168-71, No. 185.]

If Djemal Bey went to Ministry of Marine he might possibly make calls on us which might prove embarrassing.

I am told but cannot vouch for truth of the report that the Porte are seriously considering question of an Italian naval mission if we fail them. The question of command in war is occupying their attention. This possibility which could not entirely be disregarded should strengthen our hands if Russia were inclined to criticise our interest in the fleet.

Negotiations are on foot with Italian firm for purchase of six destroyers.

MINUTE.

Either the decision of the Powers that Greece is to keep Mytilene and Chios will be enforced by the fleets of all the Powers or else that decision will not be arrived at. There is no question of its being enforced by France and ourselves alone.

E. G.

No. 194.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 1221/98/14/44.

(No. 11.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 6, 1914.

M. Cambon came to see me to-day, on his return from Paris.

I told him the reply from the Triple Alliance about the southern frontier of Albania.⁽²⁾ A further reply was expected shortly about the Ægean Islands, and there were indications that this reply would be favourable as regards the islands in Greek occupation, but would perhaps not be so satisfactory with regard to the islands in Italian occupation. As to these latter islands, it was true that we could not at once have a date fixed, for the Italian withdrawal, so as to connect it with the negotiations as to the southern frontier of Albania; but I considered that we could not make a peremptory communication in Athens, insisting upon the acceptance by Greece of the southern Albanian frontier and her evacuation of territory to the north of it, without also making a communication to her about the islands in her occupation which would be more or less satisfactory. If I was pressed for a reply to the communication that the Triple Alliance had now made about the southern frontier of Albania, I would reply in this sense.

M. Cambon said that this was entirely the view of his Government, who thought that the question of the southern frontier of Albania must be connected with a settlement of the Ægean Islands question satisfactory to Greece. He heard that the authorities in Vienna were much preoccupied about the state of things in southern Albania, where there were said to be 60,000 or 70,000 armed Greeks. The Prince of Wied had suspended his acceptance of the post of Prince of Albania until the country had been pacified and a loan guaranteed.⁽³⁾ Greece might very well ask, in connection with the withdrawal of her troops, what the Powers were going to do to prevent anarchy in the district evacuated by her.

I added to this that I heard it was physically impossible for the Greek troops to be withdrawn from some districts in the middle of the winter. I thought, however, that these were difficulties with regard to which Italy and Austria might be asked to make suggestions.

M. Cambon said that Italy was now going to claim some compensation for all her expenses in the islands in her occupation. Italy wished this to take the form of a concession in the region of Adalia.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp. 87-8, No. 103.]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp. 79-80, No. 94.]

On this I said that, as he knew, I could not agree to admit any sphere of interest; but, as regards this particular concession, I opposed it only in the interests of the Smyrna-Aidin Railway Company. As we ourselves were not going to apply for new railway concessions in that part of Asia Minor, which was a field almost entirely covered now by French and German railway concessions, I should disinterest myself in the negotiations in Constantinople for the Italian concession, if the Italians succeeded in satisfying the Smyrna-Aidin Railway Company.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

No. 195.

Sir M. de Bunsen to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Vienna, January 7, 1914.

F.O. 901/98/14/44.

D. 8.45 P.M.

Tel. (No. 1.)

R. 10.45 P.M.

Minister for Foreign Affairs tells me that he has now good hopes of early answer being returned by the Powers of the Triple Alliance to the second part of your proposals—namely, that which deals with the Ægean islands.⁽²⁾ He could not say more than that it would be in general conformity with your views and with the resolutions of the conferences of Ambassadors at London. Text of reply was still being drafted in Berlin (group undecypherable). Press states that it concedes retention by Greece of Mitylene and Chios under conditions ensuring their complete neutrality. German Ambassador assures me that good progress is being made at Berlin in the direction of meeting your proposals.

The Turkish Ambassador informs the Minister for Foreign Affairs that, if Izzet Pasha is on his way to Albania, the Turkish Government has no hand in the matter or intention to interfere in any way in Albanian affairs. Minister for Foreign Affairs was much relieved by this declaration, as he had been greatly upset by recent news from Albania.

Italian Ambassador at St. Petersburg told me yesterday on his way to his post that Italy will certainly not retain a single island of those now in her occupation, and that evacuation is only subject to her obtaining compensation for expenses incurred.

⁽¹⁾ [The second paragraph of this telegram was sent to Consul-General Lamb at Valona (as No. 5) on January 8.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. Ö.-U.A.*, VII, p. 710, No. 9160.]

No. 196.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen.

F.O. 1597/98/14/44.

(No. 12.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 7, 1914.

The German Ambassador told me to-day⁽¹⁾ that he had received a telegram saying that the reply about the Ægean Islands was on its way.⁽²⁾ He gathered that it would agree to what I had suggested about the islands in Greek occupation.

⁽¹⁾ [*cp. G.P.*, XXXVI (II), p. 470.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. infra*, p. 190, No. 203.]

I said that I would wait till I received the reply; but, if it was as outlined in his telegram, it seemed to me that it would provide a basis for a joint communication by the Powers in Athens and Constantinople.

He made it clear that the reply would make the retention of *Ægean Islands* by Greece conditional upon her carrying out the evacuation of southern Albania and not causing trouble there.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

No. 197.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir R. Rodd.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 1596/756/14/44.

(No. 6.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 7, 1914.

The Italian Ambassador brought M. Martino, the Head of the Italian Foreign Office, to see me to-day. They presented the Italian view about the Turkish islands in Italian occupation. The prolonged occupation had cost Italy much money. Since the Treaty of Lausanne, the operations of Turkish Officers in Tripoli, continued contrary to the Treaty, had caused great expense to Italy, and, before giving up the islands to Turkey she ought to have some thing that would indemnify her for this. Turkey had no money, and what Italy wished to have was a concession for a port at Adalia, in Asia Minor. Without something of this sort, Italian public opinion would be bitterly disappointed.

I observed that our Secret Agreement with Italy, made many years ago respecting Tripoli,⁽²⁾ though it had not contemplated any actual alteration of the "status" in Tripoli, had yet led us to acquiesce in the Italian annexation of Tripoli.⁽³⁾ While, however, the Italians were annexing Tripoli, they had occupied the islands, and they had assured us at the time that this occupation would be only temporary. They had given us further assurances subsequently, and now it did not seem reasonable to attach new conditions to their withdrawal from the occupation. But, if they wished for some compensation from Turkey to indemnify them for extra expense, the natural solution would be a money indemnity. Turkey it appeared had no money for this purpose, and if some other compensation was asked instead of money I could raise no objection provided that it was not paid by a British Company. I then went over the familiar ground about the Smyrna-Aidin Railway Company being the only British railway enterprise in Asia Minor; and I said that, if the Italians could, by direct negotiations with the Company, satisfy the latter that their commercial interests would not suffer by the Italian concession, I would not oppose the negotiations in Constantinople for this concession.

The Italian Ambassador was anxious that I should indicate to the Company that, for political reasons, I should be glad to see them come to an agreement with the Italians.

I said that I had asked that the Company should keep us informed of what happened, but I could not ask them to sacrifice their commercial interests, and whatever view they took of the Italian proposals must be "bona fide" their own. I gathered that the Italians wished to have a concession for a port at Adalia; but that, as regards railway access to that port, dues to be levied, and so forth, they would be prepared to treat with the Smyrna-Aidin Company.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet. It was sent to Constantinople (as No. 46).]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. VIII, pp. 18-23, *passim*]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (I), pp. 259-448, Chapter LXXIV, *passim*.]

The Ambassador went on to say that the French Press, while I had been away, had been making mischief by stating that our proposals about the south of Albania demanded a date to be fixed for Italy to evacuate the islands in her occupation.

I said that I had not seen the French Press while I had been away. I had thought it had been occupied entirely with an interview of the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the subject of expenditure on armaments. But, with regard to my actual proposals about the Ægean Islands, the Italian Government had the text,⁽⁴⁾ and I would wait till I received the reply from the Triple Alliance on the subject of the islands before I discussed the question.⁽⁵⁾

The Ambassador said that the reply about the islands in Greek occupation would be in accordance with what we wished. Italy had worked in this sense, though she had not wished to put herself forward prominently, because she desired not to offend Turkish susceptibilities.

I said that I had so often heard complaints, such as I had this afternoon, of the behaviour of the Turks respecting the conditions of the Treaty of Lausanne that it did not seem to me quite natural that Italy should be on such cordial terms with Turkey and so sensitive about Turkish susceptibilities, when the conditions of the Treaty of Lausanne were not being fulfilled by the Turks.

This remark caused a revival of conversation, in the course of which the Ambassador informed me that there was a large bundle of the protests that Italy had addressed to Turkey about the non-fulfilment of the conditions of the Treaty of Lausanne. There had been no collusion with Turkey about the islands, but until Turkey was assured that she would keep them she naturally had no interest in seeing Italy evacuate them.

[I am, &c.]
E. G[REY].

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 76-7, No. 91.]

⁽⁵⁾ [*cp. infra*, p. 190, No. 203.]

No. 198.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 660/98/14/44.

(No. 7.) Confidential.

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 8, 1914.

The Russian Chargé d'Affaires informed Sir E. Crowe on the 5th instant, in strict confidence that according to reports which had reached his government from Constantinople, the Turkish government would be likely to meet the decision of the Powers as regards the islands in Greek occupation by a counter-proposal to the effect that

(1) Turkey should retain the *four* islands commanding the entrance of the Dardanelles (*i.e.*, not only Tenedos and Imbros, but also Samothrace and Lemnos);

(2) Turkey should also keep the islands along the Asiatic coast (including Samos);

(3) Turkey should recover certain of the islands in Italian occupation.

The observations of the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs on this were that he would in this matter follow the lead of England and France. Subject to this general consideration, he thought there was something to be said for letting Samothrace and Lemnos go to Turkey, in view of their strategic importance and in order to assist her

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is based on Sir E. Crowe's record of his conversation with M. de Etter. *cp. supra*, pp. 178-9, No. 192.]

in maintaining the freedom of navigation in the Straits. Perhaps some other islands could be assigned to Greece in exchange. Chios and Mitylene on the other hand ought certainly to be left to Greece, and there was no reason whatever for Turkey having Samos. In fact, no other Turkish pretensions ought to be allowed.

Sir E. Crowe said that my present position was that I had asked the Powers formally to take action on the proposal already accepted at the Ambassadors' Conference that, in return for the sacrifice which Greece was to be asked to make in southern Albania, she was to get all the islands now in her occupation except Tenedos and Imbros (and Thasos, which clearly went with the Thracian coastland). It might give rise to further discussions and complicate an otherwise clear situation, if proposals were now put forward excepting from Greek possession other islands than those already earmarked for Turkey. For this reason I should probably prefer to maintain my proposition at least for the present. If subsequently Greece herself were to seek an arrangement with Turkey by which she surrendered Samothrace and Lemnos to the latter in return for compensation elsewhere, the two parties might be left to arrange matters between them.⁽²⁾

I am, &c.
E. GREY.

(2) [Note by Sir Edward Grey: "The small Island of Castelloritza, which is I understand almost part of the Mainland may be left to Turkey. I am not sure that it has been occupied either by Italy or Greece. Greece may certainly cede to Turkey Samothrace and Lemnos and any islands that she wishes, but we cannot alter our proposal at present. E. G."]

No. 199.

Sir R. Rodd to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 1856/98/14/44.

Rome, D. January 9, 1914, 9 P.M.

Tel. (No. 8.)

R. January 10, 1914, 11.15 A.M.

M. Venizelos has just been to see me after his interview with the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs. He told the latter that he accepted South Albanian frontier as defined by Commission on condition islands occupied by Greece were retained by her. At the same time while accepting that frontier he would ask whether Powers agree to slight exchange of territory between Greece and Albania. Frontier as laid down cut off small northern portion of Pogoniani district which contained Greek villages and was entirely Greek-speaking. The coveted district only included about five hundred square kilometers, but some eight thousand people from this region actually lived in Athens and their relations with local population made future pacification very difficult. On the other hand Greece could afford to renounce to Albania considerable coastal strip assigned to her by the Commission south of Cape Stylo down to Paganja. Together with cession of this strip he would propose payment to Albania of a sum of two hundred thousand pounds in compensation. If this proposal were to be adopted it would enable him to deal with the situation in Greece where he felt he could secure its general acceptance.

The Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs had said he did not see any objection in principle to this exchange but must of course consult allies before giving definite answer. It would have been easier to agree before the Commission had submitted their line. His Excellency also said that in the reply of Triple Alliance to your proposals there would be some suggestion that the allocation of Lemnos and Samothrace might be reconsidered but it was not intended to hold out about those two islands if their assignment to Greece was insisted on. He gave M. Venizelos to understand that Greece could count on obtaining both, and suggestion is evidently

only for Turkish consumption and in order to throw the responsibility of their ultimate destination on non-Triple Alliance Powers.

M. Venizelos gathered that Italy would not require Greece actually to withdraw her troops as it would ease the situation that some organised force should remain to prevent disturbances. Gradual withdrawal would better meet the case.

He goes on to Paris on the morning of January 11th and should be in London before the end of the week.⁽¹⁾

(¹) [*cp. supra*, p. 95, No. 110, and *note* (²).]

No. 200.

Sir F. Elliot to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 1946/98/14/44.

(No. 4.) Confidential.

Sir,

Athens, D. January 9, 1914.

R. January 15, 1914.

Monsieur Streit was sworn in as Minister for Foreign Affairs on the 4th instant, and held his first diplomatic reception yesterday.

He told me that his latest information was to the effect that the Powers of the Triple Alliance were tending towards acceptance of the "English proposal" with regard to the Ægean islands in Greek occupation, on condition that they should be neutralised and that guarantees were given for the protection of minorities. (I reminded him that your proposal also required guarantees of the prevention of smuggling.) With regard to the minorities, no guarantees were required, since they were provided by the Greek Constitution, which stipulated equality of treatment for all, without distinction of race or religion. However, if the Powers required a further declaration, the Greek Government would have no difficulty in making it.

With regard to the undertaking not to fortify the islands or to use them for military purposes, Monsieur Streit said that the Greek Government were also ready to agree to it.⁽²⁾ But he would like to say to me, what he would not for the present say to any of the representatives of the Triple Alliance, that he assumed that that obligation on the part of Greece implied a corresponding obligation on the part of the Powers towards whom it was contracted to see that no infraction of neutrality is attempted by another party. They could not well deprive Greece of the means of defending her territory without guaranteeing that that territory should not be attacked.

I asked if he thought that in the event of an attack by another Power, say Italy, on Corfu, Greece was entitled to appeal to the Guaranteeing Powers to prevent it; and he replied that he certainly did. I said I did not know what your view was, but that I thought it possible that the intention of the Powers in stipulating the neutrality of the Ionian Islands was to prevent aggression on Turkey. I would however report to you what he had said.

In view of the present attitude of Turkey towards Greece Monsieur Streit's suggestion does not seem unreasonable.

It occurs to me also to suggest that in whatever public instrument the cession of northern Epirus to Albania is determined, it would be well to prohibit the erection of fortifications on the coast between the Bay of Vallona and Phtelia. If, as I cannot doubt, the object of Italy in pushing the Greek frontier as far south as she can is to

(¹) [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King.]

(²) [*cp. supra*, pp. 175-7, No. 189, and *encl.*]

keep as large a territory as possible in reversion to herself on the failure of the Albanian experiment, it would be a convenience to her to find fortifications on the coast ready to her hand.

I have, &c.

F. ELLIOT.

MINUTES.

The question raised by M. Streit as to the Powers guaranteeing Greece against an attack (by Turkey) on the islands which the Powers are going to demand should not be fortified or used for any naval or military purposes, raises an important question of principle which will have to be considered when the assurances to be given by Greece come to be formulated.

The Greek view is not unreasonable. But it may be difficult to obtain an effective joint guarantee from the Powers. Nevertheless such a guarantee would really be to our interest as it would tend to give stability to the Greek régime in the islands and would eventually give to H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] a treaty right to oppose their acquisition by any third Power, should H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] wish to do so, without necessarily obliging them to take action if the other guaranteeing Powers fail to do so.

Should we confidentially ask the Admiralty whether from their point of view they would favour such a guarantee by the six Powers?

E. A. C.

Jan[uary] 16.

The Greek view is reasonable—but the question of guaranteeing the islands against attacks will have to be carefully considered when it is raised by Greece. I do not think the Admiralty can give us very valuable advice on a question which is really one of policy—and I should be inclined to take no action for the present.

A. N.

E. G.

No. 201.

Sir R. Rodd to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 2179/98/14/44.

(No. 18.)

Rome, D. January 11, 1914.

Sir:—

R. January 16, 1914.

I have the honour to report that when I went yesterday evening to see the Minister for Foreign Affairs in order to make the communication reported in my immediately preceding despatch,⁽¹⁾ I took the opportunity to ask him when we might expect the answer to your proposals regarding the future of the islands, which the Italian press has represented as being ready for delivery, reminding him that the 18th was rapidly approaching and that the Greek evacuation of the districts assigned to Albania would be contingent on a favourable decision as regards the islands occupied by Greece.

The Marquis di San Giuliano said that he thought the question of the evacuation might be regarded as no longer urgent. The undertaking given by M. Venizelos and the new suggestions which the latter had put forward made insistence on the actual evacuation less necessary, and it might for many reasons be advantageous that, once the principle was established, the process should not be hurried on. As regards the reply, the terms of it were established, and if it had not actually been delivered it was merely a question of "rédaction," which was a lengthy process when it had to be settled by telegraph between three capitals. As the reply will no doubt be in your hands before this despatch reaches you, I need not recapitulate the general tenour of its terms which he explained to me.

The point upon which he enlarged with great emphasis was that, while Italy did not wish to retain "even a stone" in the *Ægean*, the date for her withdrawal must

⁽¹⁾ [Sir R. Rodd's despatch (No. 17), D. January 11, R. January 15, 1914, is not reproduced. (F.O. 2041/45/14/53.) The communication mentioned dealt with the question of the Albanian loan (*cp. supra*, pp. 55-6, No. 64; pp. 79-81, Nos 94-6; pp. 82-3, No 99; p. 86, No. 101; pp. 88-9, No. 104).]

depend on the Turkish Government. The legal adviser of the Government had furnished them with a clearly reasoned argument establishing that Italy was forced to remain in the islands by the non-compliance of Turkey with the terms of the Treaty of Lausanne and that, in consequence of the expenditure which had been entailed she was entitled to compensation. The claim for compensation was in fact legitimized by the Treaty of Lausanne.⁽²⁾ He repeated that the occupation cost three thousand pounds a day; that, in all, some six millions of expenditure had been incurred since the signature of the Trea[t]y. Even now new arrivals of Turkish officers in Cyrenaica were reported, and he was tempted to believe that Turkey did not wish the islands to be restored until she had sufficiently advanced her naval preparations to be able to prevent a movement in those islands in favour of annexation to Greece, or to make it dangerous for Greece to declare war and seize them.

I observed that it was a new principle in international law to claim compensation for the cost of a military occupation. He replied that there were continual new developments in international law. It was in any case beyond doubt that no Government in Italy could withdraw from the occupation of the islands after what had taken place, without some form of indemnity. He seemed to imply that a service had actually been rendered to Turkey by the occupation, which had prevented the islands from falling into the hands of the Greeks. The country would not tolerate the presentation of the huge bill upon a simple withdrawal. They did not ask for any financial indemnity. They only asked to be admitted to participation as a Great Mediterranean Power in those commercial enterprises in the Mediterranean area of the Turkish Empire, in which other Great Powers had obtained their share. In their case it would only be a small proportionate share, as they were a Power which had come to maturity late in the family of nations. But without some such participation the country would never allow the Government to surrender the only lever they could bring into action. The present Government were probably more disposed to carry out the evacuation promptly than other Governments might be, because the Prime Minister had definitely pronounced upon the question and was personally anxious to carry it through. He, therefore, hoped that the negotiations which had been initiated for the harbour works at Adalia would have our encouragement and lead to definite results.

All this has been said before but the Minister for Foreign Affairs has perhaps never put it quite so emphatically. It would seem that in this attitude Italy has secured the firm support of her allies. I believe it to be true that it will be easier to bring about the evacuation under Signor Giolitti's administration than under possible future Governments which have less prestige and authority, and it is not possible to forecast how long the President of the Council will remain in office. If then it is desirable to liquidate this question with the least possible delay, I can only recall the opinion which I have derived here from such investigation as it is possible to make, that the only alternative to a line of action on our part which I should deplore in the present still somewhat uncertain future of the ultimate orientation of Italy, is to further her claims to participation in such concessions in Turkey as she can reasonably ask for.

I have, &c.

RENNELL RODD.

MINUTE.

Sir R. Rodd was right in pointing out that it was a new principle in intern[ationa]l law to demand an indemnity. I believe the discussions between M. Nogara and the Smyrna Aidin Co[mpany] are proceeding smoothly and hold out hopes of an amicable arrang[emen]t. But I have my doubts if some fresh pretext will not be found for prolonging Italian occupation.

A. N.
E. G

(2) [*v. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (I), pp. 438-42, No. 466, *encl.* and *note* (4).]

Sir M. de Bunsen to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 2494/98/14/44.

(No. 14.) Confidential.

Vienna, D. January 12, 1914.

Sir,

R. January 19, 1914.

During the visit which Hilmi Pasha, Turkish Ambassador, was good enough to pay me this afternoon, His Excellency developed further his views on the Ægean Islands question, which I have already had the honour to report upon in my despatch No. 1 of January 1st.⁽²⁾

His Excellency is still convinced that the attribution of Mitylene and Chios to Greece, under whatever technical safeguards, must lead, sooner or later, to war between Turkey and Greece. He still thinks that Bulgaria would actively cooperate with Turkey in such a war. Roumania, he now considers, would be kept quiet by the mere confirmation by the *Sobranie* of the cession of territory made by Bulgaria to that country. But even assuming Roumanian hostility, Turkey, with Bulgaria as an ally, would be strong enough to contend with both Greece and Roumania. Servia would be rendered innocuous either by an Albanian rising, or, as His Excellency thinks more probable, by an arrangement with Bulgaria on the basis of the cession to Bulgaria of a strip of territory including Kochana and Istip, and of the extension of Servian territory southwards to Salonika at the expense of Greece. Bulgaria would be compensated for her warlike effort by obtaining Seres, Drama and Kavala. A patriotic Greek statesman ought to see the danger, and he was not without hopes that M. Venizelos might yet see it. Greece should realize that by accepting the gift of the two islands in question at the hands of the Powers, she would be sacrificing, almost certainly, the whole of her Macedonian acquisitions. From the point of view of the Entente Powers who desired the maintenance of the *status quo* in the Mediterranean he could not understand how it could be desired to give the Dodecanese to Turkey rather than to Greece. Turkey could not hold the Dodecanese against Italy, which country would only evacuate the Dodecanese, if she ever did so, with the intention of picking a quarrel with Turkey whenever it suited her, and then reoccupying it. Nothing could be easier than to pick such a quarrel, and if Italy were given a footing in Asia Minor, she would repeat there the methods which had turned out so well for her in Tripoli. But His Excellency did not think that the Italians really intended to evacuate. Turkey would give them a pretext for remaining by refusing the desired concession to Adalia. Anyhow the result would be the same, and the Islands, if Turkey ever got them, would inevitably revert to Italy. Thus the *status quo* of the Mediterranean would be destroyed. On the other hand, by giving the Dodecanese to Greece, re-occupation by Italy would be for ever precluded. Only in this way could Italy be kept out of the Eastern Mediterranean. M. Venizelos ought to summon the Greek notables of Mitylene and Chios to Athens and explain to them the true situation, which required that they should acquiesce at least for a time in the maintenance of Turkish rule over the Islands, as the only means of preserving for Greece her hold over a portion of Macedonia. If in the course of the next few years Greece grew manifestly stronger than Turkey at sea, the islands would naturally become Greek in the end. For the present it was in the true interest of Greece to renounce possession of them.

Greece, Hilmi Pasha said, would want an army of 500,000 men to hold her portion of Macedonia against Turkey and Bulgaria. But at present she could not put more than 100,000 men in the field, and it would take years to create an army fit to stand up against an assault by the two allies. Bulgaria was getting stronger every day. She was quietly re-organizing her army, though nothing was said about it.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 173-5, No. 188.]

His Excellency spoke of Enver Pasha as a young man full of ambition, who alone could have dared to dismiss by a stroke of the pen, some hundreds of Turkish officers from active service. Izzet Pasha had shrunk from assuming responsibility for such a bold stroke, and Izzet had himself suggested Enver as being the only man capable of putting it into execution. Hilmi did not pretend to approve. He was too old for such desperate experiments. He had however, great regard for Enver and hoped he might prove a successful War Minister. If he failed, the War Office would have to be again filled by an older and more prudent Minister.

Speaking of the recent abortive Turkish raid on Albania, Hilmi Pasha said neither the Grand Vizir nor the Turkish Government had anything to do with it. Nor had Izzet Pasha, who was far too cautious and reasonable to embark on such schemes. It was likely enough that the enterprise had originated at some meeting of Albanians in Constantinople, where there are at least 50,000 Albanians. I asked His Excellency if he knew anything of Bekir Bey. He said he had known him well in Macedonia as a daring and unscrupulous leader of bands who had done much harm to the Greeks. Hatred of the Greeks was his most marked characteristic. It might well be that he had offered his services in Albania to combat the Greeks.

His Excellency thought the disturbed condition of Albania was due largely to the failure of the Austrians to understand the importance of Essad Pasha. When Essad had come a few months ago to Vienna he had been given the cold shoulder. He was now engaged in demonstrating that no Government in Albania would be able to ignore him. He was very rich and had a much stronger hold on the country than Ismail Kemal who had nothing to live on but the doles he received alternately from Austria and Italy, and even from Greece. If the Prince of Wied ever came to Albania, he would do well to select his advisers neither from the camp of Ismail Kemal nor from that of Essad.⁽³⁾ Albania could only be successfully governed by applying the system employed by England at Aden. No attempt should be made to set up a European administration throughout the country. The Central Government should employ as its agent in each of the regions into which the country was naturally divided the local chieftain who was most feared there. Thus there would be no interference with the secular habits of the population which would never submit to be administered and taxed in a European manner.

The Turkish Ambassador takes an unhopeful view of the prospects of peace being maintained in the Balkans during the present year.

I have thought it worth while to report the above conversation although there is perhaps reason to doubt the soundness of His Excellency's conclusions on several important points. It seems to me difficult to believe that Roumania would tamely acquiesce in the tearing up of the Treaty of Bucharest,⁽⁴⁾ in exchange merely for a Bulgarian Parliamentary acceptance of the new frontier between Bulgaria and Roumania. It seems also probable that Austria-Hungary, which watches every Servian move with suspicion, would flare up again at the thought of Serbia becoming mistress of Salonika. But though the Turkish Ambassador is no doubt over confident, it is impossible not to be struck by the unanimity with which the representatives of Turkey are endeavouring to convince foreign Powers of the determination of that country to resist even by force, the incorporation of Mitylene and Chios in the Kingdom of Greece.

I have, &c.

MAURICE DE BUNSEN.

⁽³⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 111, *Ed. note.*]

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II), pp. 1141-4, SUBJECT INDEX, *sub* BALKAN WAR THIRD.]

Memorandum communicated by Herr von Schubert.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 1929/98/14/44.

German Embassy, London, January 14, 1914.

L'Allemagne consent que les îles de la Mer Égée occupées par la Grèce—excepté Imbros et Ténédos ainsi que Kasteloriso—soient attribuées à la Grèce à la condition que les troupes grecques aient évacué, jusqu'à la date du 18 janvier, les territoires attribués à l'Albanie y compris l'île de Sasseno et que le Gouvernement Hellénique assume l'engagement de faire cesser toute résistance contre l'ordre des choses qui a été établi par les Puissances en Albanie méridionale. Il s'ensuit que l'attribution des îles à la Grèce n'entre en vigueur qu'après l'accomplissement des conditions ci-dessus mentionnées.

L'Allemagne accepte les garanties demandées par la note anglaise pour les îles et elle propose en outre que d'autres garanties soient données par la Grèce pour la protection des minorités musulmanes.

Quant à la dernière proposition de Sir Edward Grey, concernant le Dodecanèse, le Gouvernement Italien maintient sa déclaration qu'il sera prêt à rendre ces îles à la Turquie, mais il déclare que la date et les conditions de la restitution doivent former l'objet d'un accord ultérieur entre les deux Gouvernements conformément au traité de Lausanne.

Le Gouvernement Allemand et le Gouvernement Austro-Hongrois adhèrent à ce point de vue.

Londres le 14 Janvier 1914.

MINUTE.

My first impressions are that we should express gratification at the terms of the reply and observe as regards the first paragraph that the date of the 18th of January, having already arrived or been passed the word "immediately" should take its place. The words "engagement de faire cesser" &c. will require a little modification. Greece cannot be held responsible for possible future troubles that might be caused by Ismail, Essad or any adventurer. We want therefore some words such as "undertake to offer no resistance and not to support or encourage directly or indirectly resistance of any kind." I would make it stronger and say "to discourage" but that would imply that Greece has such an influence on the inhabitants of the district that it ought properly to be Greek.

2nd and 3rd paragraphs may be agreed to. As regards the Dodecanese we might while accepting that paragraph say that as long as one of the Great Powers remains in occupation of these Ægean Islands the situation will remain abnormal and that while the arrangement of the return of these Islands to Turkey in accordance with the provisions of the Treaty of Lausanne is primarily a matter to be settled by Italy and Turkey, yet the Powers with whom by agreement it rested to decide the ultimate destination of the Islands have an interest in their fate. We might suggest that two communications be drawn upon these lines, one suitable for communication at Athens, and the other at Constantinople,⁽²⁾ on condition that the Powers will in common accord take steps if necessary to make their decision respected.

These are only my first impressions. I will discuss it on Monday morning.

E. G.

16.1.14.

⁽¹⁾ [This memorandum is minuted as having been sent to the King. A copy was sent to Paris in despatch (No. 23) and to St. Petersburg in despatch (No. 19) on January 14, for communication to the French and Russian Governments. A telegram stating that the memorandum had been received, and that it amounted to a general acceptance of the British proposals, was sent on January 15, D. 5 p.m., to St. Petersburg (No. 20); to Rome (No. 8); to Vienna (No. 11); to Constantinople (No. 30). v. also *infra*, p. 193, No. 205; pp. 196-8, No. 211, and *encls.* cp. G.P., XXXVI (II), pp. 475-6. A similar communication was received from Count Trauttmansdorff (F.O. 1931/98/14/44), cp. *ö.-U.A.*, VII, pp. 732-3, No. 9193, and *encl.*, and from the Marquis Imperiali. (F.O. 1929/98/14/44.)]

⁽²⁾ [v. *infra*, p. 193, No. 211, *encls.*; pp. 231-4, Nos. 252-3, and *encls.*]

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Private.⁽²⁾

Dear Sir Edward,

Constantinople, January 14, 1914.

Many thanks for your letter of the 28rd of December which reached me last Saturday in the bag.⁽³⁾ It is very kind of you to have written.

I hesitate to say anything about the islands question, because I do not know on what lines agreement will be reached between the Powers.

My despatch No. 10⁽⁴⁾ which goes by this bag points out some of the disadvantages of a settlement unacceptable to Turkey. The Turks dwell much upon the danger to Turkey from a permanent Greek occupation of Mitylene and Chios, but I am myself more impressed by the danger to Greece, whose position seems to be far from secure, and will be considerably weakened if Mitylene and Chios are left as hostages at Turkey's mercy. Unless it is proposed to put Turkey into leading strings at once and impose financial control and limitation of armaments, this danger is a real one.

Djévad Bey, who was councillor in London, called on me today and repeated to me what everyone is saying that Turkey cannot accept a permanent alienation of islands so near her coast as Mitylene and Chios. If the Powers use force to compel them to do so, they will submit, but such a settlement would only be short-lived. The Porte are most anxious to avoid war: they had fully realised how delicate was the position, but had hoped that an arrangement would be come to.

The proposal now before the Powers had upset all calculations; it had increased Venizelos' difficulty, made it almost impossible for him to compromise and had compelled the Porte to take measures against future possibilities.

He begged me to represent to you that a hostile decision of the Powers, communicated to them in a form which it would be necessary for them to accept or to refuse, would increase the danger of the situation.

Could the Turkish Government not be consulted? Must the decision be definite and irrevocable? I do not quite know what was in his mind, but I think that there is an idea that an exchange of Mitylene and Chios for some of the smaller islands now occupied by Italy (excluding Rhodes) might be arranged.

He said that he had not been authorised or permitted to speak to me and begged that his name might not be mentioned.

I said that I was not dealing with the question, and that I did not know what was its last phase, or in fact anything about it, but that your proposal was linked up with the Epirus frontier, and unless that question was left open, I did not see how the discussion about the islands could be left open.

I agreed to let you know what he had said.

I do not know whether in the course of the conversations with the other Powers any opportunity may offer of some kind of compromise, or whether Venizelos' visit to Rome and to the other capitals has any connection with the possibility of an ultimate exchange of islands. If that were likely, then perhaps it might be found possible to suspend a final verdict, but I would not go so far as to recommend this without further knowledge and consideration.

I have held out no hopes to Djévad Bey, but I should like to say again, how desirable a compromise seems from a local point of view, as eliminating one source of danger to peace.

Another source would still exist in the question of Salonica, for it is pretty clear that some understanding exists with Bulgaria for common action in regard to

(1) [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Sir A. Nicolson; to Sir E. Crowe.]

(2) [Grey MSS., Vol. 41.]

(3) [v. *supra*, pp. 164-5, No. 180.]

(4) [Sir L. Mallet's despatch (No. 10), D. January 7, R. January 19, 1914, gives the Turkish economic, political, financial and geographical objections to the cession of Mitylene and Chios to Greece. (F.O. 2453/98/14/44).]

Southern Macedonia, and of late there seems to be evidence that the plot is thickening. This danger would be considerably diminished, if an arrangement could be brought about between Servia and Bulgaria, on the basis of a cession of Ishtip and Kochana to the latter. Bulgarian ambitions would be satisfied temporarily, and I think that the temptation to intrigue here with the Turks would be considerably diminished. I do not say that it would entirely disappear.

The sudden outburst of energy on the part of the Turks, the ardour for reform of army and navy has revived speculation as to the future of this country. Most people think that very little will come of the reforms,—that the German Mission will arouse jealousies and be unable to accomplish much, and that the navy will never be able to compete with those of European Powers.

There are some people, however, who think the contrary, and that we have got men in power here who are determined to put Turkey on a modern basis and who will succeed sufficiently to make her rather more formidable than she has been for some years.

Some people are talking of financial control and limitation of armaments.

I expect that there would be some difficulty in imposing financial control on an unwilling Turkey, who would quite see that it was the end of her aspirations and the beginning of partition.

She might be expected to put up a serious fight and the Powers might have to face the question of using force. The withholding of money would be met by the imposition of the $4\frac{1}{2}\%$ and by a seizure of the Debt revenues. This would bring securities down with a run, and the French investor would be hard hit.

In my view it would serve our interests better if control came gradually and indirectly, as, indeed, it is coming.

The Turks realize that they can do nothing by themselves, but like all Orientals they attach great importance to saving their faces. A curious instance of this is their action in regard to Liman von Sanders.⁽⁵⁾ The foreign correspondents were told four days ago that he was no longer Commander of the first Army Corps, but the native Press has been forbidden to mention it, and not a word has been said to the Ambassadors. They consider that this procedure saves their dignity.

Yours sincerely,

LOUIS MALLET.

P.S.—Since writing this your telegram asking me whether I have heard whether any direct negotiations are going on between Greece and Turkey about the islands has arrived.⁽⁶⁾

Unless I can glean any information during the next few hours, I propose to reply that I have no information.

I had already written in a despatch⁽⁷⁾ that the Turks are likely to employ the interval between the decision of the Powers and the arrival of a new ship in negotiations with Greece. It is quite possible that some indirect pourparlers may have begun somewhere already. On receiving your telegram I went to see my Italian Colleague Garroni, who is extremely well informed, and talked about the islands among other subjects. I mentioned the possibility of a direct understanding of course quite casually and without saying a word of your enquiry, but he said nothing worth repeating on the subject.

He is very pessimistic as to the effects of an adverse decision and as to the inevitable result and he irritates me by constantly repeating that Italy have only yielded to the British proposal out of respect for you.

L. M

⁽⁵⁾ [*cp. infra*, pp. 338–423, Chapter LXXXVII, *passim*.]

⁽⁶⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 25) of January 13, 1914, D. 5.5 p.m., is not reproduced as the contents are sufficiently indicated above. The telegram was also sent to Athens (No. 4). (F.O. 1915/98/14/44.)]

⁽⁷⁾ [This refers to Sir L. Mallet's despatch (No. 10) summarized in *note* (4).]

No. 205.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 1929/98/14/44.

Tel. (No. 27.)

Foreign Office, January 19, 1914. 10.30 P.M.

My desp[atch] No. 23.⁽²⁾

My view is that I should express my general gratification at the terms of the reply of the Triple Alliance Powers,⁽²⁾ and make the following observations on particular points.

Para[graph] 1. As the date of January 18 has already been passed, the expression "as soon as possible" should take its place.

The words 'engagement de faire cesser' should be modified. Greece cannot be held responsible for possible future trouble that might be caused by Ismail Kemal or Essad or some independent adventurer in S[outh] Albania. I would therefore suggest some such wording as "undertakes to offer no resistance and not to support or encourage directly or indirectly resistance of any kind." I would make it stronger and say "discourage."

Para[graphs] 2 and 3 can be agreed to.

Para[graph] 4. As regards the Dodecanesc, I would, while accepting that para., say that as long as one of the Great Powers remains in occupation of these Ægean islands, the situation will remain abnormal, and that, while it is primarily a matter for Italy and Turkey to arrange the return of these islands to the latter in accordance with the provisions of the Treaty of Lausanne, yet all the Powers with whom by the subsequent agreement of last August⁽³⁾ it rested to decide the ultimate destination of the Islands have an interest in their fate.

I should conclude my reply to the Triple Alliance Powers by suggesting that two declarations, based on their answer and modified as above, should be drawn up for communication by the 6 Powers to Athens and Constantinople respectively, on condition that it is formally acknowledged by the Powers that they will in common accord take steps if necessary to make their decision respected by each of these two countries.

Y[our] E[xcellency] should inform M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] and ascertain his views as soon as possible.⁽⁴⁾

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to St. Petersburg (No. 27). It was repeated also to Berlin (No. 23); to Rome (No. 11); to Vienna (No. 14); to Constantinople (No. 39), "for information only."]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 190, No. 203, and note ⁽¹⁾. It would appear that the two sentences included in paragraph 1 of the text there given are treated as two separate paragraphs in the above telegram. For the answer to the Triple Alliance, v. *infra*, pp. 196-8, No. 211, and *encls.*]

⁽³⁾ [v. *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II), pp. 949-50, No. 1195; pp. 954-5, No. 1202; pp. 1066-7, *App. V.*]

⁽⁴⁾ [The *aide-mémoire* communicated by Sir G. Buchanan to M. Sazonov is given in *Imperialismus*, 1st Ser., Vol. I, pp. 47-8, No. 51. A conversation between M. Isvolski and M. Doumergue on this subject is recorded *ibid.*, p. 64, No. 75. Replies concurring with the above telegram were received from St. Petersburg on 21 January, telegram (No. 20), (F.O. 3024/98/14/44), and from Paris on 22 January, despatch (No. 36), (F.O. 3163/98/14/44).]

No. 206.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir R. Rodd.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 3057/98/14/44.

(No. 25.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 19, 1914.

The Italian Ambassador came to see me to-day, and began by expressing the hope that I was pleased with the reply of the Triple Alliance about the Ægean Islands.⁽²⁾

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet. Telegrams were sent to Rome (No. 10); to Berlin (No. 22); to Vienna (No. 13).]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 190, No. 203.]

I said that I thought that all the Powers might make communications in Constantinople and Athens, respectively, based on this reply. I was ascertaining the views of the French and Russian Governments as to the making of these communications, and I would then send an answer to the Triple Alliance on this point.⁽³⁾ One or two modifications would have to be made: the date of the 18th January was now impossible, and we should have to substitute "as soon as possible" or some words to that effect.

The Ambassador said that he thought his Government now contemplated January 31st as the date to be specified.

I observed that the Greeks could not be held responsible for everything that might happen in Albania as a result of the actions of Essad or Ismail Kemal or independent adventurers.

The Ambassador admitted this, but proceeded to tell me with some indignation of the actions of the Greeks at Delvino in disarming and illtreating Mussulmans, and of the landing of Evzones, and other things that were quite contrary to the spirit of the conversations of M. Venizelos in Rome.

I said that of course such action on the part of Greece must be discontinued. The Italian Government could, if they liked, make the suggestion when we came to make a communication in Athens, that the communication should include a mention of these proceedings as instances of the sort of thing that Greece must discontinue.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

(3) [*v. infra*, pp. 196-8, No. 211.]

No. 207.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Elliot.⁽¹⁾

Private & Secret.⁽²⁾

My dear Elliot,

London, January 21, 1914.

M. Venizelos broached with me this morning⁽³⁾ the idea of an "Entente" between England and Greece to preserve the "status quo" in the Mediterranean. He intimated that Greece was ready for such an arrangement, and would like it. Now that the Conference of Ambassadors was over, there would perhaps not be the same objection to its being considered.

I said that I thought it premature to consider a separate arrangement of that kind between two Powers. We had better first see whether a guarantee of all the Powers could be secured for the *Ægean Islands* in Greek possession. It would be undesirable to enter into a separate arrangement about the Mediterranean which must offend the susceptibilities of other Powers interested in it. Later on, perhaps, all the Powers interested in the Mediterranean might be disposed to enter into an agreement to maintain the "status quo." It would be much better to arrange things in that way, as a separate agreement between two Powers was always regarded as being directed against others. For instance, when Germany had proposed to us an agreement for the maintenance of the "status quo" in the North Sea, we had declined to enter into an agreement unless all the Powers interested in the North Sea were invited to do so also.⁽⁴⁾ This had been done, and the agreement had been come to in this way.

(1) [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Morley; to Lord Crewe.]

(2) [Grey MSS., Vol. 24.]

(3) [For M. Venizelos' visit, *cp. supra*, p. 95, No. 110, and *note* (2).]

(4) [*v. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. VIII, pp. 137-8, No. 113, *sqq.*]

M. Venizelos observed that Alliances and "Ententes" might be purely defensive, as the Triple Alliance was understood to be.

I said that the Triple Alliance, at its origin, had been regarded as a menace to France, and it had resulted in the formation of the Franco-Russian Alliance, to counterbalance it.

Finally M. Venizelos asked that, as he had mentioned the idea, it should be regarded as most confidential. He said that he had not mentioned it even in Paris.

I said that I would mention it only to the Prime Minister and my Colleagues. I had given him my personal opinion, and I should like to reflect upon it, but I had no desire that it should be brought under the reflection of others.

Yours sincerely,
E. GREY.

No. 208.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.

Private.⁽¹⁾

Dear Sir Edward,

Constantinople, January 21, 1914.

I saw Limpus this morning and he told me that the Minister of Marine had spoken to him often on the subject of the islands. The Admiral had not been able to advise them that the islands especially Lemnos were not of great strategic importance to them, but now the decision of the Powers was known he had told them clearly that they must accept it. His impression is that they do not want to make war on Greece but would like to negotiate.

His opinion on the subject was that they might come to an arrangement by exchanging some of the Dodecanese islands against Chios, Mitylene and Lemnos. The Minister told him that they had already "tried." I asked Limpus whether he meant that they had approached Greece and he was not sure but thought it must mean that.

Limpus said that if he were in their position he would try again.

The idea of negotiation is in the air and this is perhaps natural, as the Turks, as far as one can tell, are, apart from financial embarrassments, powerless by sea at present and in a bad military position in Thrace for an advance on Salonica. My despatches will show you however that there is considerable likelihood of disturbance in Macedonia some time or another, and that there are strong signs of collusion with Bulgaria.

The situation is disquieting because all the elements of discord exist in the Treaty of Bucharest. If some agreement could be come to between Greece and Turkey about the islands and if Bulgaria and Servia could be brought nearer on the basis of a small cession of territory to the former there would be a better chance of peace for a time.

I hear from Crawford that Günther has been pressing the Turkish Government to put on the 4% at once without waiting for the consent of the Powers.⁽²⁾

I hope to be able to say something definite about Armenian reform in a day or two.

Y[ou]rs sincerely,
LOUIS MALLET.

⁽¹⁾ [Grey MSS., Vol. 41.]

⁽²⁾ [This subject will be treated in *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. X (II).]

No. 209.

*Sir F. Elliot to Sir Edward Grey.**Athens, January 28, 1914.*

F.O. 3313/98/14/44.

D. 1.45 P.M.

Tel. (No. 12.)

R. 5 P.M.

Turkish Minister who has not yet presented his credentials spoke yesterday unofficially to Greek Minister for Foreign Affairs about islands saying that possession of Chios and Mitylene by Turkey was essential to avoid another Cretan question.

Minister for Foreign Affairs replied that if Turkish Minister had spoken officially he would have replied that question did not admit of discussion between them being in the hands of the Powers: unofficially he would say that it was possession of the islands by Turkey not by Greece that would raise a Cretan question: that their neutralisation would guarantee Turkey against aggression and that Greek Government being desirous of friendly relations would discourage Hellenic agitation on mainland.

Turkish Minister was dissatisfied and said he would return to the subject, Greek Minister rejoining that he would receive the same answer.

Sent to Constantinople.

No. 210.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir L. Mallet.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 1929/98/14/44.

Tel. (No. 43.)

Foreign Office, January 23, 1914.

Following is text of note which I have addressed to German, Austrian and Italian Embassies on receipt of the reply of their Gov[ernmen]ts⁽²⁾ to my circular tel[egram] of Dec[ember] 12⁽³⁾ resp[ectin]g Southern Albania and the Ægean Islands, and of communication which I propose sh[oul]d be made to the ^{Turkish} ~~Greek~~ Gov[ernmen]t on this subject.

(Here insert text of Note.⁽⁴⁾ At end of Note, cypher words: "Note ends. Enclosure begins.")

(And at end of tel[egram]:—)

Text of comm[unicatio]n to ^{Greek} ~~Turkish~~ Gov[ernmen]t⁽⁵⁾ follows by post, for your inform[atio]n.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Athens (No. 5) *mutatis mutandis*; telegrams (Nos. ⁴⁴/₆) gave instructions "You should join with your colleagues in making this communication to ^{Turkish} ~~Greek~~ Government when they receive similar instructions."]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 190, No. 203, and note ⁽¹⁾.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 76-7, No. 91.]

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. immediately succeeding document.*]

⁽⁵⁾ [*v. immediately succeeding document, and encls.*]

No. 211.

Sir Edward Grey to Prince Lichnowsky.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 1929/98/14/44.

Y[our] E[xcellency],

Foreign Office, January 23, 1914.

I have the hon[our] to acknowledge the receipt of the note, dated Jan[uary] 14,⁽²⁾ communicated to me by order of Y[our] E[xcellency]'s Gov[ernmen]t on the subject

⁽¹⁾ [*cp. G.P., XXXVI (II), pp. 478-81. This communication was made also to the Marquis Imperiali and to Count Trauttmansdorff, cp. Ö.-U.A., VII, pp. 773-6, No. 9239, and encl. Copies were sent to Paris (No. 34); to Berlin (No. 21); to Vienna (No. 8); to St. Petersburg (No. 29); to Rome (No. 28); by telegraph to Constantinople (Nos. 43-4); to Athens (Nos. 5-6.)*]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 190, No. 203.]

of the Ægean islands and the southern frontier of Albania, and to express my gratification at the terms of the reply of the German Austrian Gov[ernmen]t to the Italian suggestions of H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] for the solution of these questions. I have now the hon[our] to offer the following observations upon the above-mentioned note.

In regard to para[graph] 1 thereof, in which Y[our] E[xc]cellency's Gov[ernmen]t agrees that the Ægean islands in Greek occupation—except Imbros, Tenedos and Kasteloriso—sh[oul]d be retained by Greece on condition that she sh[oul]d evacuate the territories allotted to Albania by Jan[uary] 18, it is necessary to observe that, as the date in question is already past, the words “jusqu'à la date du 18 janvier” must be replaced by some other expression such as “aussitôt que possible,” or the mention of a new date or dates. As a further condition to such

German
assent it is also proposed by the Austrian Gov[ernmen]t “que le Gouvernement Italian

hellénique assume l'engagement de faire cesser toute résistance contre l'ordre des choses qui a été établi par les Puissances en Albanie méridionale.” The wording of this condition appears to H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] to require some modification, inasmuch as the Greek Gov[ernmen]t c[oul]d not justly be held responsible for eventual troubles in those regions that might be due to causes over which it has no control, such as internal rivalries or the acts of some independent adventurer. I w[oul]d therefore propose that the sentence above quoted be replaced by some such wording as: “que le Gouv[ernemen]t hellénique s'engage à n'opposer aucune résistance, et à n'appuyer ou encourager, d'une manière directe ou indirecte, aucune résistance, quelle qu'en soit la forme, à l'ordre des choses qui a été établi par les Puissances en Albanie méridionale.”

H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] agree in the stipulation of Y[our] Gov[ernmen]t that the definitive allocation to Greece of the islands in question sh[oul]d only take effect on the fulfilment of the above-mentioned conditions.

German
H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] also concurs in the proposal of the Austrian Italian

Gov[ernmen]t that guarantees sh[oul]d be given by Greece for the protection of Mussulman minorities.

H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] take note of the declaration of the Italian Gov[ernmen]t that they are ready to restore the Dodecanese to Turkey, but that the date and conditions of this restitution must form the object of an ulterior agreement between those two Gov[ernmen]ts in conformity with the Treaty of Lausanne. I w[oul]d, however, point out that, as long as one of the Great Powers remains in occupation of these Ægean islands, the situation will remain abnormal, and that, while it is primarily a matter for Italy and Turkey to arrange the return of these islands to the latter in accordance with the provisions of the Treaty of Lausanne, yet all the Powers with whom, by the subsequent agreement of last August, it rested to decide the ultimate destination of the islands have an interest in their fate.

In conclusion I w[oul]d propose that two declarations, the texts of which are enclosed herewith, and which are based on the above-mentioned note of Jan[uary] 14, and modified in the sense that I have suggested, should be communicated by the six Powers at Athens and Constantinople respectively, on condition that it is formally acknowledged by the Powers that they will in common accord take steps, if necessary, to make their decision respected by each of the two countries concerned.

[I am, &c.]
E. G[REY].

Enclosure 1 in No. 211.

Declaration.

The Sublime Porte undertook by Article 5 of the Treaty of London of May 17th (30th) 1913, between Turkey and the Allied Balkan States,⁽³⁾ and also by Article 15 of the Treaty signed at Athens between Turkey and Greece on November 1st [14th], 1913,⁽⁴⁾ to leave to the six Powers the decision as to the destiny of the *Ægean* Islands.

The six Powers consequently took the matter into their careful consideration, and, after interchange of views, have decided that Greece should restore to Turkey the islands of Tenedos and Imbros and should retain definite possession of the other *Ægean* islands which she at present holds in occupation. The island of Kastelorizo will also be restored to Turkey. The six Powers have also decided that satisfactory guarantees shall be given by Greece to the Powers and to Turkey that the islands, possession of which she will retain, shall not be fortified or used for any naval or military purposes, and that she will take effective measures for the prevention of smuggling between the islands and the Turkish mainland.

The six Powers also engage to use their influence with Greece to secure that these conditions are effectively carried out and maintained. The six Powers will further require from Greece satisfactory guarantees for the protection of Mussulman minorities in the islands which she acquires.

The six Powers confidently trust that the above decisions will be faithfully respected by the Ottoman Government.

Enclosure 2 in No. 211.

Declaration.

Under Article 5 of the Treaty of London of May 17th (30th), 1913, between Turkey and the Allied Balkan States,⁽³⁾ and also by Article 15 of the Treaty signed at Athens between Turkey and Greece on November 1st [14th], 1913,⁽⁴⁾ the Hellenic Government agreed to leave to the six Powers the decision as to the destiny of the *Ægean* Islands.

The six Powers have consequently decided to allocate to Greece all the *Ægean* Islands at present in Greek occupation with the exception of Tenedos and Imbros which must be restored to Turkey, as also the island of Kastelorizo. The Powers have further decided that, as regards the islands assigned to Greece, satisfactory guarantees should be given by the Hellenic Government to the Powers and to Turkey that these islands should not be fortified or used for any naval or military purposes; and that effective measures will be taken for the prevention of smuggling between the islands and the Turkish mainland.

The six Powers have engaged to use their influence with the Hellenic Government to secure that these conditions are faithfully carried out and maintained. They also request that Greece will give satisfactory guarantees for the protection of musulman minorities in the islands which she has acquired under the above mentioned decision of the six Powers.

The definitive allocation to Greece of the islands which the Powers have decided should be left in her possession will only become effective after the Greek troops have evacuated the territories assigned to Albania as well as the island of Sasseno and when the Greek Government have formally undertaken to offer no resistance, and not to support or encourage, directly or indirectly, resistance of any kind to the order of things which has been established by the Powers in Southern Albania.

The six Powers confidently trust that the above decisions will be faithfully respected by the Hellenic Government.

⁽³⁾ [*v. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II), p. 1050, *App.* III.]

⁽⁴⁾ [For the text of this treaty *v. B.F.S.P.*, Vol. 107, pp. 893-902. *cp. infra*, p. 281, No. 313.]

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.

Constantinople, January 26, 1914.

F.O. 3785/98/14/44.

D. 6 P.M.

Tel. (No. 62.)

R. 10 P.M.

Your telegram No. 43 of Jan[uary] 23.⁽¹⁾

A formal acknowledgment by the Powers that they will make their decision respecting islands respected might commit them to the use of force if Turkey at any future time found herself strong enough to attempt re-occupation of Chios and Mitylene or made a forward movement in Thrace with object of bringing pressure on Greece to give them up. Decision of the Powers would obviously be inapplicable if Turkey and Greece came to an amicable arrangement, which, as far as I can say, is desired here.

If my information is correct it would seem unlikely that Turkey would re-occupy islands until her naval forces are superior to those of Greece, but when that happens, unless she has come to terms with Greece in the meantime and unless there is a change of administration here, she might endeavour to re-occupy some of the islands or make a move in Thrace, perhaps both. In the circumstances, a naval demonstration might have requisite effect, but before Powers commit themselves it would be well to consider what other measures could be taken if it failed.

An international occupation of islands in dispute would be logical, but obviously undesirable.

An international occupation of Dedeagatch might be effective in preventing movements in Thrace, but might be thought to commit us more than British interests warrant.

I am inclined to think that pressure least open to objection, although it also has obvious drawbacks, would be financial, and that if France, partly for reasons of self-interest, is not able to withhold money from Turkey, and is unable to devise guarantees that money will not be spent on war, it might be more prudent for the Powers not to commit themselves to threats of force, although French would possibly prefer it.

MINUTES.

I believe that if the Powers remain united and will plainly intimate to Turkey, all together, that they will insist on their decision being respected, Turkey will bow to the inevitable.

E. A. C.

Jan[uary] 27.

We must wait to hear whether the Powers will engage to take steps if necessary to make their decisions respected.

A. N.

If the Powers will not agree to the phrase about making their decision respected the whole thing may fall through as far as we are concerned.

On the other hand if Turkey and Greece wish to make subsequently a voluntary exchange of the Islands the Powers need not and in my opinion should not interfere.

E. G.

(¹) [*v. supra*, p 196, No. 210]

Sir Edward Grey to Sir L. Mallet.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 2580/98/14/44.

(No. 52.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 26, 1914.

The Turkish Ambassador called here on the 15th instant, and was received by Sir A. Nicolson. H[is] E[xc]cellency mentioned that he had read in the newspapers that the Triple Alliance had replied to the British proposal regarding the *Ægean* Islands, and when Sir A. Nicolson said that this was the case, His Excellency enquired what was the nature of the reply. Sir A. Nicolson pointed out that H[is] M[ajesty's] Government must communicate the substance to the French and Russian Governments and that, until the views of these two Powers were received,⁽²⁾ he was unable to give any information.

Tewfik Pasha said that he had received a telegram from the Ottoman M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] to the effect that the Turkish Government trusted that proper consideration would be given to their views in regard to the disposal of the islands adjoining the mainland of Turkey, and looked to England especially to protect Turkish interests, as they wished to base their policy, present and future, on a most friendly understanding with England.

Sir A. Nicolson told His Excellency that the future of the islands had been left in the hands of all the Powers, and that any decision which might be arrived at would be the collective decision of all the Powers, and not of any one Power; that all considerations and views had been carefully examined and weighed by the Powers before arriving at a decision, and that the conclusions which would finally be reached would be such as would, in the opinion of all the Powers, be best calculated to safeguard the interests of all parties.

The Ambassador explained that he had merely spoken unofficially.

[I am, &c.

E. GREY.]

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe; to Lord Morley. It is based on Sir A. Nicolson's record of his conversation with Tewfik Pasha. Sir A. Nicolson added the following note to his record:—

“I thought it well to be a little general and vague—but I rather gathered that Tewfik had been told to intimate that Turkey's friendship to us was dependent on our attitude in regard to the islands—and so I wished to sweep all the Powers into the same bag. A. N.”]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 193, No. 205, and *note* (4).]

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.

Constantinople, January 27, 1914.

F.O. 3948/98/14/44.

Tel. (No. 64.)

D. 4·20 P.M.

R. 4·30 P.M.

Your telegram No. 43 of January 23⁽¹⁾.

Should note communicating decision be collective or identic? Question may be raised when all my colleagues receive their instructions and to avoid delay I should be glad of your instructions. Perhaps I should conform myself to the views of the majority of my colleagues?⁽²⁾

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 196, No. 210, and *note* (1).]

⁽²⁾ [A telegram (No. 50) was sent to Sir L. Mallet on January 29, D. 3·40 P.M., informing him that the communication, if made, should be collective, but that the agreement of the Powers had not yet been given. (F.O. 3948/98/14/44.)]

Sir M. de Bunsen to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 4474/98/14/44.

(No. 25.)

Sir,

Vienna, D. January 27, 1914.

R. January 31, 1914.

Having reported in my despatches No. 1 of January 1st⁽²⁾ and No. 14 of January 12th⁽³⁾ my previous conversations with Hilmi Pasha, Turkish Ambassador at Vienna, I have the honour to forward the following account of some further remarks which His Excellency made to me yesterday in conversation.

While still maintaining stubbornly the position that Turkey will not accept without protest the proposed attribution of Mitylene and Chios to Greece, Hilmi Pasha's tone was rather less menacing than before. Turkey, he said, was in no warlike mood. She did not contemplate an immediate campaign for the re-capture of the Islands or for the re-conquest of Greek Macedonia. She would merely bide her time. Complications would surely arise which would enable her to have her revenge. She had perhaps no strong reason for hurrying the Italians out of the Islands of the Dodecanese. Why should she do so, when she was convinced that Italy would only hand them over to Turkey with the intention of taking them back again by picking a fresh quarrel with her at the first convenient moment? Moreover the southern Islands were of no particular importance to Turkey. She would have no reason for wishing to oblige the Powers by putting an end to the Italian occupation. Nor could she be expected after the contemplated act of mutilation, to use her influence in restraining her former Mussulman subjects now incorporated in Greece and Servia from making matters generally uncomfortable for their new masters. I understood His Excellency to mean that Turkey would encourage, or at least do nothing to discourage, the formation of marauding bands in Northern Greece and Southern Servia when the winter is over, and that there would be no lasting peace in the Balkans till Turkey was satisfied.

His Excellency realizes that the Powers could not be expected to modify their decision concerning the Islands. He still thinks however that Greece may wake up to a sense of the danger to which her Macedonian possessions will be exposed if the "vital interests" of Turkey are ignored in the settlement of the Islands question. He would not be surprised if M. Venizelos on his return to Athens from his present tour, were to make some proposal to the Ottoman Government conceding a portion at least of their demands. From a casual remark of His Excellency's, I am inclined to think that he had in view a possible Greek proposal to retain Chios for Greece, and to restore Mitylene to Turkey. Hilmi Pasha is a native of Mitylene and always speaks with bitterness of the proposal to hand it over to Greece. His Excellency again quoted Lucien Wolf who has contributed to the weekly "Graphic" of January 24th a further article in opposition to the settlement favoured by the six Powers. He told me that M. Steeg, Assistant Director of the Ottoman Bank, had lately passed through Vienna and had appeared to be convinced by Hilmi's arguments to the effect that Greece, either on her own account or acting on the suggestion of the Powers, would be well advised to enter upon a discussion of these questions directly with Turkey.

Hilmi Pasha also spoke of Albania. He doubts if Albania will be able, for many years to come, to pay her own way. The country can provide a revenue of between 5 and 10 millions of francs a year. The whole of this revenue would be required to pay the gendarmerie alone. This force must be brought up to 10,000 men if it is to be of any real use. According to Hilmi's experience 700 francs per man per annum is the lowest possible estimate of the cost. Thus he reaches 7 millions of francs a year (£280,000) as the annual cost of the gendarmerie. What, then, would remain for the Civil List of the Prince and for the ordinary cost of the administration? Austria-

⁽¹⁾ [A copy of this telegram was sent to Consul-General Lamb.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 173-5, No. 188.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 188-9, No. 202.]

Hungary and Italy must make up their minds to find some 12 or 15 millions of francs a year to make good the deficit. They can hardly expect the other Powers to share expenditure secured by no conceivable guarantee.

If the Prince of Wied makes up his mind to take over his Principality of Albania, he will be faced, in Hilmi's opinion, with the difficult problem of how to distribute his favours without alienating the chiefs whom he finds it impossible to satisfy. Essad Pasha will of course endeavour to put the Prince in his pocket, but the Prince will no doubt be alive to this danger.⁽⁴⁾

The general impression left on my mind by Hilmi Pasha's declarations was that His Excellency believes in the power of his country to make or mar the peace of the Balkans, and in the resolve of the Turkish Government to make themselves as disagreeable as possible to the Powers if something is not done to meet their grievance.

I have, &c.

MAURICE DE BUNSEN.

(⁴) [*cp. supra*, pp. 92-3, No. 107]

No. 216.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir R. Rodd.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 4336/98/14/44.

(No. 82.) Confidential.

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 28, 1914.

The Italian Ambassador told me to-day that his Government thought that, instead of saying "as soon as possible" for the Greek evacuation of Epirus, a new date would have to be proposed.

I said that I had rather expected this, and had so worded my reply⁽²⁾ as to leave that alternative open.

The Ambassador told me that his Government accepted what I had said about Greek responsibility, provided that Austria would accept it also.

With regard to a pledge that the Powers would make their decision respected, Italy must reserve the question of taking part herself in applying any forcible pressure to Turkey; but he was to inform me most confidentially that this reserve was made only in order to facilitate Turkey's making to Italy concessions that were necessary to secure the Italian evacuation of the Ægean Islands.

I said that, if a reserve of this sort was made, we should probably reserve our rights to abstain from the application of force either to Greece or to Turkey.

The Ambassador said that his Government pointed out that the question of applying force to Turkey to secure the islands for Greece could not arise until Greece had actually evacuated Epirus and could be discussed then.

I said that we would not agree to put pressure on Greece to evacuate Epirus unless it was understood that, when Greece had done so, all the Powers would if need be apply pressure in the same way to Turkey with regard to the islands. It was most unpopular to apply pressure to any Power: if pressure was to be applied in connection with one decision of the Powers, and if we were to join in it, it could be only on the understanding that the same course would be followed by all the Powers in connection with the other decision.

As for making a reserve in order to facilitate obtaining concessions from Turkey we ourselves wished for some concessions and if Italy made a reserve from that motive I did not see why we should not do the same.

(¹) [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

(²) [*v. supra*, pp. 196-7, No. 211.]

The Ambassador considered that as the concession which Italy desired was connected with the evacuation of the islands it was a special case, but I could not see this.

[I am, &c.]
E. G[REY].

No. 217.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir R. Rodd.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 4837/98/14 '14.

(No. 38.) Confidential.

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 28, 1914.

The Italian Ambassador, after drawing my attention to-day to the unfortunate leakage by which my last Note⁽²⁾ had been published in the "Daily Telegraph" of yesterday, said that the Marquis di San Giuliano was very much upset at the expression in my Note that, till the Aegean Islands in Italian occupation were restored to Turkey, the situation would be abnormal. The Ambassador explained to me how essential it was that the Italians should have something from Turkey. He showed me most confidentially and in secret, as a mark of confidence, a Note that they were addressing to Turkey, in which they recited all the expenses to which Turkey had put them, claimed the right to present to Turkey a bill of the total expenses when they restored the islands, and, knowing that Turkey could not pay such a bill, proposed that Italy should receive an economic concession. The Ambassador feared that my Note would be regarded by Turkey as an intimation that, if Turkey refused all concession to Italy, the Powers would intervene to see that the islands in Italian occupation were restored to Turkey without a concession on Turkey's part. He urged me very strongly to say something in Constantinople to remove this impression.

I said that my Note had not been intended to prejudice any negotiations that were proceeding between Italy and Turkey. My statement, that while any Great Power remained in occupation of the islands the situation was abnormal, was intended as a statement of fact. It had been agreed that the situation was abnormal; and, had I let the statement in the Italian reply to our first proposal pass without comment, it might have been construed as meaning that we had no interest in the question. But what I had said was intended as a statement of fact, and not as a reproach against anyone.

The Ambassador asked me whether I would propose, when the moment came for handing the islands of the Dodecanese back to Turkey, that two Italian Inspectors should be retained to see that the population was fairly treated, in accordance with the Article of the Treaty of Lausanne. This would be very helpful with Italian public opinion.

I replied that I could not make any promise on this point, and all I could say was that it was a point to be considered when the time came for handing back the islands. I added that I could not encourage any new conditions.

The Ambassador said that his Government would not put it forward as a condition, and it would not be one; but it would be very helpful if I would put it forward.

In the course of this conversation, the Ambassador dwelt upon the difficulty that the Marquis di San Giuliano had in keeping Italian public opinion quiet as regards Great Britain over the question of the islands. The Ambassador himself had worked exceedingly hard in this direction also, and he appealed to me to make things easy.

I said that, if it was a question of being patient, the Italian Government must remember our point of view. Italy had annexed Tripoli, and this had excited

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 196-7, No. 211.]

Mussulman feeling in Egypt; but, owing to our secret agreement of years ago, disinteresting ourselves in Tripoli,⁽³⁾ though it did not contemplate any actual change in the status of Tripoli, we had felt bound to stand on one side. In the course of the war, the Italians had occupied some islands, assuring us that the occupation was only temporary. After the war was over, the conditions of the Treaty of Lausanne were attached to the evacuation of the islands, and now further conditions were being made. The Italian Government had selected the district close to the Smyrna-Aidin Railway to acquire a concession, and, had it not been for friendship to Italy, I should have opposed that concession unconditionally, instead of trying to find a way to reconcile it with the interests of the British Company, which I must protect. In addition, the Italian Government were now claiming that, if Abyssinia broke up, they were to have Lake Tzana, the control of which we regarded as essential to the waters of the Nile. In fact, in one way and another, during the last year or two the Italian Government had encroached more upon British interests than any other two European Powers put together. I most cordially endorsed the Ambassador's plea that he personally had done everything to make relations good and to smooth public opinion, but his Government had not always made things easy for us.

[I am, &c.]
E. G[REY].

(³) [*cp. supra*, p. 182, No. 197, and *note* (²).]

No. 218.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Private.⁽²⁾

Dear Sir Edward,

British Embassy, Constantinople, January 28, 1914.

I will spare you a long letter by this bag as I am already ashamed of the amount which I am sending home this week.

The Press is quieter since the receipt of a telegram from Djavid in Paris warning the Gov[ernment] that they will get no money, if they do not adopt a less warlike attitude. This is an index of the influence which France can exercise on the situation here and I think that the best policy would be for them to dole out money occasionally, so as not to lose this leverage. Once the Turks are given a large loan, there is no knowing what they might not do in their present mood—if it lasts. They have sent Tocheff to Sofia in a terrible fright. They flout the Servian Delegate when he talks of his peace negotiations and it cannot be denied that the Greeks will be in a most unpleasant position, unless a compromise is arranged or unless the Powers guarantee the islands against attack, which would be most difficult I should imagine.

There are undoubtedly many unpleasant features in the situation and some which distinguish it from similar crises in the past.

The Ministers are reckless and desperate—there has been for some time a secret Mussulman propaganda going on which has recently broken out in boycotting of Greek shops and in general acts of violence. Those who know tell me that this might easily spread and result in hostility to all Christians. There is not much doubt that the Salonica Jews are at the bottom of the boycott which benefits their compatriots, of whom the Greeks are successful trade competitors. The Turks think that the movement will benefit Mussulmans but it will do nothing of the sort for they are not traders and hardly own any shops at all.

(¹) [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Sir A. Nicolson; to Sir E. Crowe. It is minuted by Sir Edward Grey: "I will dictate a reply. E. G." *cp. infra*, p. 224, No. 240.]

(²) [Grey MSS, Vol. 41.]

I do not want to exaggerate this danger but it requires watching and *unless we are prepared to go far*, I would deprecate anything in the nature of threats. I am very much interested in the work which is engrossing to an extent which I did not think possible when in the F[oreign] O[ffice] but the difficulties of obtaining correct information and still more of forming an accurate forecast of events are very great and must excuse me, if I am wrong.

Y[ou]rs sincerely,
LOUIS MALLET.

No. 219.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir L. Mallet.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 3402/98/14/44.

(No. 57.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 29, 1914.

The Turkish Ambassador informed Sir A. Nicolson on the 22nd inst[ant] that he wished to ascertain what was passing in regard to the Ægean Islands &c. Sir A. Nicolson replied that the Powers were in consultation on the subject and that he could give H[is] E[xc]cellency no information.

Tewfik Pasha then stated that he had received a visit from M. Venizelos, who had intimated that Greece would be glad to arrange an "Entente" with Turkey. H[is] E[xc]cellency had answered that he personally would be in favour of such an "Entente," but that M. Venizelos, when he returned to Athens, had better think over the matter and explain to the Porte on what basis he desired an "Entente," and what was to be its scope and character. Tewfik Pasha remarked that he understood M. Venizelos to desire an "Entente" guaranteeing peace between Turkey and Greece in the Ægean Sea. Upon Sir A. Nicolson asking whether such a proposal would be favourably regarded at Constantinople, H[is] E[xc]cellency observed that he did not know. He had, he said, been consulted by his Gov[ernmen]t as to overtures made by Bulgaria for Turkish co-operation in possible adventures against Greece and Servia, or in any case for benevolent Turkish neutrality should hostilities arise. He had strongly recommended, and he believed his Gov[ernmen]t were in accord, that such overtures should not be entertained. Turkey had need of repose and recuperation, and it would be foolish policy to assist Bulgaria, even indirectly, to have her revenge on Greece or Servia, as should Bulgaria be victorious she would thereby become stronger and would then endeavour to recover from Turkey what the latter had been able to regain. It was not to the interest of Turkey to encourage the designs or aspirations of Bulgaria.

[I am, &c.
E. GREY.]

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is based on Sir A. Nicolson's record of his conversation with Tewfik Pasha.]

No. 220.

Sir R. Rodd to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 4525/98/14/44.

Tel. (No. 18.)

Rome, D. January 30, 1914, 9 P.M.

R. January 31, 1914, 11.30 A.M.

Minister for Foreign Affairs this morning spoke to me regarding that portion of your reply to the Triple Alliance Powers referring to situation as abnormal as long

as Italy occupied the islands and said that this sentence had produced unpleasant impression in the country though Italian Government had done their best to check adverse press comment. My impression would be rather in a contrary sense and that Minister's object is to hope to make capital out of pretext of grievance. While accepting my thesis that statement referred to was merely part of a summing up of results achieved or still incomplete he asked what purpose was served by addition of a sentence which was interpreted here as an admonishment and he showed me notice of interpellation in the Chamber just handed in asking whether Italian Government had made any observations on what appeared to be dictation regarding an Italian interest.

He said that he did not think that he could get the interpellation withdrawn and there might be others in a similar sense but he might be able to procure postponement of reply and he would like to be able to give not merely an answer which would dispose of contention but one which would secure general expressions of approval by his being able to state that the attitude of His Majesty's Government had been actually friendly. As it was Turkey would take advantage of any impression derivable from your note to Triple Alliance Powers⁽¹⁾ that there might be divergence between England and Italy in order to postpone or refuse concession they had asked for. Also he heard from Constantinople that the fact we had asked for information about any concession to be granted in south-western Asia Minor had been there interpreted as implying that we were opposed to such concessions. He asked whether it would not be possible to make it known at Constantinople that this was not the case and rather to urge an acceleration of the solution really favourable to Turkey by her meeting Italian aspirations in reasonable spirit where they did not conflict with existing rights. If this question could be settled and he could announce a concrete result as secured or proximate to which our good-will had contributed, it would enable him to respond to interpellation in a manner which would greatly advance our good relations, efface any unwelcome impression derived from the text of the note, and also further object we ourselves had in view, viz. restoration of islands to Turkey.

He said Italian Ambassador at Constantinople had gathered that Turkey was not anxious at present to have to take islands. I said that I thought he was mistaken. He replied that if so why did she make difficulties over simple issue of concession.

While it may well be that this exposition masks an adroit manoeuvre to further objects which Minister for Foreign Affairs has in view, I do not wish to be understood to deprecate action such as he suggested which I think may materially contribute to solution and would have its advantages here.

(¹) [*v. supra*, pp. 196-8, No. 211, and *encls.*]

No. 221.

Sir R. Rodd to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 5554/98/14/44.

(No. 42.) Very Confidential.

Sir,

Rome, D. January 30, 1914.

R. February 7, 1914.

I have the honour to report that I have this morning had a long and interesting conversation with the Minister for Foreign Affairs in the course of which I was able to extract from him certain admissions which throw some light on recent events and especially on the preliminaries to the reply of the Triple Alliance Powers to your proposals regarding the southern Albanian frontier and the islands.

I have already reported by telegraph⁽²⁾ the especial point to discuss which His Excellency had invited me to the Foreign Office, but as we traversed much more

(¹) [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe; to Lord Morley.]

(²) [*v. immediately preceding document.*]

ground than it was possible for me to deal with in a summary report, I will endeavour to recapitulate as far as possible all that passed between us, reserving for another despatch his observations about the Austro-Italian Bank concession.

The Marquis di San Giuliano began by saying that the passage in your note to the representatives of the Triple Alliance Powers, dwelling on the fact that the situation would not be normal so long as one of the Great Powers remained in occupation of certain of the *Ægean* islands, had produced a somewhat grave impression in this country. He did not himself see things quite in the light in which people who did not know England and the English modes of expression were apt to regard them here. He felt that in drafting this sentence you would have regarded it as simply the record of a fact which was indisputable and which English directness of thought had no hesitation in formulating. But just because it was indisputable and undisputed, and because in international communications of such a nature every word is apt to be carefully weighed, people asked themselves here why was this particular sentence included. Some special purpose was presumed, and the conclusion at once adopted that it constituted a sort of admonition to Italy.

I observed that in your reply you were summing up the situation as revealed in the answer of the Triple Alliance Powers, and having regard to the lines laid down at the Reunion of the Ambassadors in London, you had simply placed on record the results achieved as contrasted with those which were still incomplete. It appeared to me that what was really abnormal was the susceptibility of the Italian public, if they were obliged to go out of their way to affect umbrage on such a pretext. His Excellency replied that they were exceptionally susceptible, especially since the long tension of the war with Turkey, which was a new experience in the history of the nation, and they had by no means recovered from it yet, and had to be carefully handled. He had done his best to hold the press in restraint. With the "*Tribuna*," he had been tolerably successful (he subsequently admitted that the "*Tribuna*" article practically emanated from the Foreign Office); with the "*Giornale d'Italia*," less so.

Now with regard to this statement I venture to think that His Excellency's language was "diplomatic" rather than accurate, and I am the more persuaded of this by reason of a piece of evidence to which I will return later. My own impression is that the public in Italy would have been little impressed by the exposition of the obvious contained in your reference to the situation as abnormal, if the question of its significance had not been suggested to them. I had learned from my German colleague before the press had any knowledge of the terms of your reply that the Italian Foreign Office was preoccupied with the phrase in question, and the unanimity with which the Roman press had followed the view of the Consulta is suggestive. I feel assured that the resourceful Minister for Foreign Affairs had perceived that the pretext of a grievance and the alleged public preoccupation might be turned to useful account in an endeavour to gain us over to supporting the Italian claim for concessions in Asia Minor.

The Marquis di San Giuliano went on to say that he did not see what purpose was served from our point of view by the words to which he had referred. Moreover, they were likely to have an unfortunate consequence, inasmuch as in Turkey they would be understood to imply that there was a prospect of divergence between Great Britain and Italy, and the well known methods of Turkish diplomacy would jump at an opportunity which encouraged procrastination and the postponement of a settlement with regard to the Italian concessions, which would therefore tend also to postpone the restoration of the islands to Turkey.

His Excellency then showed me the text of an interpellation announced in the Chamber on the subject of your reply, which had, he said, just been handed to him in accordance with the conditions of preliminary notice by Count Soderini, who had only left him just before I came in. In this interpellation the deputy enquired whether the Italian Government had made any comments on the implied dictation as to the mode of dealing with an Italian interest.

Now my interview with the Minister for Foreign Affairs was to have taken place on the preceding evening but was postponed as His Excellency did not feel very well, and if this interpellation had only been handed to him just before I came in, he could not have been in possession of it when he first suggested our meeting. At the same time without this interpellation to use as an argument there would have been much less reason for the suggestion he was about to make to me, and therefore I am of opinion that he was perfectly aware, when he invited me to a conversation, that such an interpellation was impending, and my presumption is that it has a collusive character. This presumption together with the conviction to which I have above referred, that the press has not been so much restrained as prompted, have led me to conclude that the Minister for Foreign Affairs has been combining in his active and resourceful brain an ingenious method for securing that our influence at Constantinople should be exercised in favour of the concessions which it has now become a matter of the first importance to the Italian Government to obtain.

To return to the interpellation, the terms of which His Excellency admitted were rather strong, I observed that it appeared to me that the reply was easy. A settlement of the various questions arising out of the Balkan war, which had been left to the Powers to deal with, had made considerable progress; the international situation would once more become normal when the liquidation was complete; as long as there were obstacles to its completion it would remain to that extent abnormal, and was admitted to be so by Italy herself. It was therefore quite beside the mark to describe an official document summing up the position as partaking of the nature of dictation to Italy. He said that no doubt it would be easy to dispose of the interpellation in general terms, but he would have preferred that it should not have been necessary. He did not think he could obtain its withdrawal but it might be possible by agreement with the interrogator to secure a postponement of the reply and discussion. It would be worth while to make this effort, if by so doing he could be enabled to give an answer which would not only meet the facts of the case but which would at the same time give him the opportunity of convincing the Chamber that all suspicions and insinuations such as were implied in the terms of the notice were not only unfounded but in direct opposition to reality. He would like to be able to make a reply which would convince the House of the sincerity of Anglo-Italian friendship. The desire for information, which we had expressed at Constantinople, with regard to any contemplated concessions in the neighbourhood of Adalia, which he recognised as certainly legitimate and natural, had been misinterpreted by the Turkish Government and was by them regarded as signifying that we were opposed to any such concessions being granted to Italy. This had made their task more difficult, as the Turk still sought his advantage in exploiting the supposed rivalries of the Powers. Would it not be possible to take steps at Constantinople to remove this misapprehension and to record that we should take a favourable view of any such arrangement, not conflicting with our own acquired rights, which would accelerate the withdrawal of Italy from the islands? If something concrete could be obtained, and he were enabled to announce it in the Chamber with an expression of appreciation at the friendly attitude displayed by Great Britain in bringing about the result, it would not only remove any unfortunate impression which might have been received here of an absence of cordiality, but would enable him to give a triumphant and crushing answer to the insinuations implied in the interpellation.

He felt there was the more reason to adopt this course because the terms of the passage in your note to which he had first drawn attention had weakened the case of Italy to some extent at Constantinople. It was essential for her to remain on friendly terms with Turkey, and yet she had had to place herself in opposition to Turkey by adhering to the proposal for the transfer to Greece of the islands which she had taken possession of during the war. By so doing Italy had lost ground in Turkey.

This gave me an opportunity for observing that I quite understood his difficulty there, as I had gathered that the Turkish Government had expected to have the support of Italy against their surrender to Greece. The Marquis di San Giuliano, who

appeared for a moment at a loss for an answer, said that Turkey had no right to have formed such an impression. The most that could have been anticipated would have been that Italy might dissociate herself from any direct action and leave it to the other Powers to deal with the question. This convinced me that the reports which have reached us with regard to Italy's action at Constantinople in this matter had good foundation.⁽³⁾ He went on to say that it had been a very difficult issue for Italy to meet. She had, he now in a moment of frankness admitted, resisted the acceptance of your proposals as regards the islands held by Greece up to the last moment, and only given way in the face of the determined insistence of her allies. A strong card to play in the negotiations with Turkey had thus been lost, and the latter Power was now making it felt that Italy's professions of friendship had led to no practical advantage.

These unexpected revelations were extremely interesting, and I felt that the admission that Italy was looking out for occasions of proving herself the friend of Turkey with a well-defined object in view gave me an opportunity of touching on another matter. I said to His Excellency that the article to which he had referred in the "Tribuna" as having been controlled by the Foreign Office, contained, it appeared to me, a passage which was hardly felicitous. It was there said that the consideration of eventual measures to make the decisions of the Powers binding on both Greece and Turkey might logically be postponed so far as Turkey was concerned until after the attribution of the islands to Greece had become definitive; that an exchange of views on this subject was going on between the Powers of the Triple Alliance, and that the Italian Government found in this portion of the British reply a new occasion to display to Turkey the friendship by which they were inspired and would continue to be, if Turkey reciprocated this friendship in a concrete manner. I observed that, of course, this was only a newspaper article, but it had appeared in a semi-official organ, and surely to make a bid for the friendship of Turkey by what was tantamount to an announcement that Italy could be induced for a price to oppose any steps to enforce the decisions of the Powers with whom she had acted, was rather a strange proceeding, though it was to some extent explained by what I had gathered from him as to the previous policy pursued. I could understand the policy, but I could not well understand their compromising its possible success by giving it away. His Excellency said it was impossible in any case nowadays to keep anything secret. France would see to that. The article in question (translation of which will be found in my despatch No. 39 of yesterday's date,⁽⁴⁾ had, he admitted, been directly inspired by his Department. He could not however be responsible for any passage in it. At the same time, as he knew the passage in question the moment I referred to it, I had no doubt it had been drafted at the Foreign Office. He was, I think, rather perplexed to know how to answer, but with his usual adroitness endeavoured to explain that the step implied was really in our interest, as, if Turkey could be induced by Italian friendliness to assent to the conditions which would make the withdrawal from the islands possible, we ought to be content. I could not quite restrain my amusement, in which he frankly shared, and I congratulated him on his ingenuity in turning the question, though he had not convinced me that that was the way in which the words would be interpreted by those who read the text.

His Excellency then said that he had just received a very interesting report from the Italian Consul at Calcutta, discussing the actual situation in India and bearing testimony to a considerable improvement under Lord Hardinge's viceroyalty. He had however drawn attention to the fact that at a recent Indian Native Congress at Lucknow the Mussulman element had been present in considerable numbers, which was a new and rather disquieting symptom. The Consul attributed this to the dissatisfaction of the Indian Mussulmans with the anti-Turkish attitude of the Home Government during the Balkan war and its liquidation, and especially over such questions as those of the islands.

⁽³⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp. 166-7, Nos. 182-3.]

⁽⁴⁾ [Sir R. Rodd's despatch (No. 39), D. January 29, R. February 4, 1914, is concerned chiefly with the views of the Italian press. (F.O. 5081/98/14/44.)]

It was evident that this report had afforded His Excellency an expedient for recommending to our notice the utility of a friendly attitude to Turkey and for deprecating rigorous measures in enforcing the decisions of the Powers.

I replied that I did not think the complaint of the Mussulmans was so much that we had opposed Turkey as that we had not actively defended her and supported her when attacked; and that the real occasion for their discontent had been the war in Tripoli and the wresting away of Mussulman provinces from the Khalifa by Italy, without any protest on our part. His Excellency was obliged to admit that as a point of fence this argument had scored. But when I continued to argue that it was the promoting occasion of the Balkan war and all the subsequent misfortunes of the Ottoman Empire, he put forward a very interesting objection. He said it was not the fault of Italy that the Tripoli war had afforded the Balkan states their opportunity. It was the fault of another Power (Austria) which had intervened to prevent Italy from availing herself of the means of bringing pressure to bear on Turkey which would have concluded the Tripoli war in a month or six weeks.

This despatch has, I fear, run on to an inordinate length but it was necessary to record the process by which the Marquis di San Giuliano was led to make disclosures which will, I am sure, prove interesting and to explain the reasons which led me to believe that the issue which he began by raising was put forward with a deliberate object.

Whether this is so or not, and I have little doubt that it is, the consequences which may result, must be taken into consideration. The susceptible Italian will quickly seize the point, will feel that we have shown a want of cordiality and that he has a right to be aggrieved at what he regards as an implication that the word of his Government is not as good as their bond. This impression can now no doubt be easily effaced, and as there is every reason to believe that Italy, with the support of her allies will end by obtaining some concrete concessions from Turkey, it appears to me that it is in our interest that they should be obtained with, and perhaps through our goodwill rather than be supposed to have been secured in spite of our opposition. I have ventured before to submit that the final orientation of Italy in Europe is not yet determined and I feel that we have still some fair prospect of inclining the scale in the most advantageous direction. Therefore even if the process of enforcing it on our notice may excite suspicion, I think the suggestion of the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs is well worthy of our consideration.

I have, &c.

RENNELL RODD.

MINUTES.

An enlightening despatch.

Thank Sir R. Rodd for his very interesting and suggestive despatch.⁽⁵⁾

A. N.

E. G.

⁽⁵⁾ [A despatch (No. 42) was sent in these terms on February 13. (F.O. 5554/98/14/44.)]

No. 222.

Sir E. Goschen to Sir Edward Grey.

Berlin, January 31, 1914.

F.O. 4568/98/14/44.

D. 8.30 P.M.

Tel. (No. 14.)

R. 9.30 P.M.

I had a short conversation yesterday with the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs on the subject of your reply to the Triple Alliance Powers respecting Albania and the Ægean islands.⁽¹⁾ He said he thought your reply was slightly evasive. I asked him in what way, and he said "vague" was perhaps the term he ought to have used.

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 196-8, No. 211, and *encls.*]

On my pressing him on the subject, he said you had expressed no decided opinion as to whether evacuation should be "aussitôt que possible" or on a fixed date as desired by Italian Government. Further, that you had omitted to mention any condition with regard to evacuation in your draft communication to Greek Government.⁽²⁾ I replied that you had probably done this as the point was still unsettled, and that terms of communication could not be definitely fixed until all the Powers were in agreement, but he begged me to call your attention to the point. He told me the word "abnormal" had caused great dissatisfaction in Italy. I pointed out while a country was occupied by foreign troops it could not be regarded as being in a normal state, and that in the sense you had used the word it was absolutely devoid of offence. After some discussion, he admitted that perhaps the Italians had attached too much importance to the word. His Excellency also thought words in last paragraph of your note from words "on condition that" to the end were somewhat vague, as you offered no opinion as to what steps Powers should take to make their decisions respected. He would be glad to know your ideas on this subject, as he was sure that the Imperial Government would not agree to participate in any coercive measures.

(²) [v. *supra*, p. 198, No. 211, *encl.* 2.]

No. 223.

Sir E. Goschen to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 4606/98/14/44.

(No. 44.)

Sir,

Berlin, D. January 31, 1914.

R. February 2, 1914.

As I have already had the honour to report to you by telegraph M. Venizelos called upon me on the 28th instant⁽²⁾ and was good enough to give me an account of his conversation with the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and of the reception given by the latter to the various suggestions and proposals which he submitted to His Excellency. To put the result of these conversations briefly, Herr von Jagow admitted that the suggestion made by M. Venizelos to the effect that if the Greek Government were called upon not to fortify their Islands, the Ottoman Government should, on their side, be called upon to engage not to attack them, was quite logical and reasonable; but he stated at the same time that Germany was opposed to a naval demonstration, or at all events would not take part in one, either to compel the Ottoman Government to give the above mentioned engagement or generally to enforce the decision of the Powers. As regards the other proposals of M. Venizelos, viz. that Greece should evacuate the districts occupied by her troops in Southern Albania by "étapes," and that certain wholly Greek districts allotted by the Powers to Albania should be ceded to Greece in return for 5 million francs and a slight rectification of frontier in favour of Albania on the coast, Herr von Jagow said that the Imperial Government would be quite ready to agree to them if the other Powers raised no objections.

This account of the conversation was given to me by M. Venizelos and confirmed to me today by Herr von Jagow.

Although M. Venizelos showed himself so anxious that Turkey should be restrained from any aggressive action by a naval demonstration on the part of the Powers, he nevertheless spoke to me in a very optimistic vein of the small chance there was of Turkey making war on Greece. He regarded a "coup de main" against Scio and Mitylene, an eventuality with regard to which Herr von Jagow had expressed some anxiety, as entirely out of the question (tout à fait exclus), owing to the Turks being quite aware that any such attempt would be easily frustrated by the strong force of Greek torpedo boats which were stationed round those islands.

(1) [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

(2) [Sir E. Goschen's telegram (No. 11) of January 29, 1914, D. 8.45 p.m., R. 11 p.m., is not reproduced as the contents are sufficiently indicated above. (F.O. 4244/98/14/44)]

As regards a campaign on land, Turkey would certainly not undertake such a dangerous adventure without assistance direct or indirect, from Bulgaria, and he had the firm conviction that such assistance would not be forthcoming. The Bulgarians were too exhausted in a military sense to give direct assistance, and as regards indirect assistance, they were fully alive to the danger of letting the Turks march through territory from which they had only so recently been ousted. Besides Roumania was an important factor which made for peace, as both Turkey and Bulgaria knew that she would resist any attempt on their part to upset the equilibrium in the Balkan States which she regarded as her own creation.

Further, without Bulgaria Turkey would certainly not be in a position to make war on Greece as long as she had not command of the sea, and that she would not at all events have until her new Dreadnought was in fighting trim. That would in all probability not be the case until towards the end of the year. Between now and then many things might happen at Constantinople and amongst other things Enver Pasha, who was the chief source of anxiety, might have disappeared from the scene!

Notwithstanding all his optimism M. Venizelos seemed rather disappointed that Herr von Jagow had not fallen in with his ideas of a naval demonstration, even to the extent of detaching the German stationnaire from Constantinople for that purpose.

He was also disappointed that he had not been able to convince the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador here that his suggestion that the Greek troops should evacuate the occupied districts in Albania by *étapes* was not a favour which Greece was asking, but an arrangement suggested for carrying out the evacuation with the minimum of disorder and for enabling the small force of gendarmerie available to deal successively with such opposition as might arise on a small scale instead of being hopelessly outnumbered by an entire population, as might be the case if the whole district occupied was evacuated at the same time. M. Venizelos hoped however that Count Berchtold would take a clearer view of what was meant by his suggestion.

Herr von Jagow spoke to me this afternoon on the subject of the conversations and he told me that he had made it so clear to him that Germany would take no part in a naval demonstration, that in subsequent conversations with the Emperor and the Chancellor M. Venizelos had not alluded to the subject. Herr von Jagow reiterated to me the arguments he had used in talking this matter over with M. Venizelos, namely that Germany was opposed in principle to naval demonstrations and had never taken part in one, and further that the Imperial Government objected to participate in action of which the duration could not be foreseen and of which the efficacy was so doubtful.

He told me also that the Imperial Government were ready and willing to give any amount of good advice to the Ottoman Government and to point out to them the folly of entering upon another military adventure but that they would not take part in any measures of coercion.

Whether from fear of being pressed to participate in such measures, or because of information received from Constantinople, Herr von Jagow informed me that he was now less anxious respecting aggressive action on the part of the Turks and felt fairly confident that during this year at all events there would be no fresh war. He added however that should he be wrong in this point, and war break out, it was his firm opinion that all the Powers could, or, in fact, should do was to use their best endeavours to localise it. I told Herr von Jagow that I could not agree with him on that point. It seemed to me that it was very much the business of the Powers to see that the resolutions to which they had come after long deliberation and negotiation were loyally carried out by the parties interested, and that, personally speaking, I thought that there had already been quite enough disregard shown of decisions arrived at by the Powers. If such rebuffs were allowed to continue the prestige of the Great Powers in the Near East would reach a very low ebb.

He said that in the case of arbitration it was the duty of the arbitrator to give a decision, but none of his business to coerce either of the parties between whom he had arbitrated to carry out that decision. I said that I could not see the analogy; this was

not a case of arbitration, but a decision on the part of the Great Powers in a matter in which they had, some of them a direct, and all of them an indirect, interest. We had some further conversation on the subject but the upshot of it was that Herr von Jagow gave me to understand once more that the Imperial Government would give advice but that they would not imperil their great interests in Turkey by taking part in any measures that even had the appearance of coercion or undue pressure. I told him that it would be equally disagreeable to His Majesty's Government to exercise pressure on Turkey, where British interests were from many points of view perhaps even greater than those of Germany, but that still I thought that you held strongly the opinion that it was incumbent on the Powers, having once given their decisions, to see that they were carried out loyally by the parties concerned.

I have, &c.

W. E. GOSCHEN.

MINUTES.

I am afraid that the attitude adopted by the German government, coupled with the care that has been taken to take credit for it in anticipation at Constantinople means the end of the policy of co-operation between England and Germany, and the relapse on Germany's part into the cynical policy of promoting discord among other Powers for the purpose of acquiring a position of vantage for herself.

It is a question whether we should not make an earnest effort to bring home to Herr von Jagow what his present policy really implies, and I still think there would be an advantage of communicating without further delay with the triple alliance Powers somewhat in the sense of the circular telegram of which I submitted a draft this morning.⁽³⁾

E. A. C.

Feb[ruary] 3.

After the telegrams which were despatched this morning,⁽³⁾ it would, I submit, be well to await replies to them before taking any further steps. Presumably we shall very shortly receive also the replies of the Triple Alliance to our circular telegram⁽¹⁾—We shall then see exactly what the attitude of the Triple Alliance is to be. It is not a question as to whether Turkey is or is not likely to go to war or whether she is or is not in a position to do so. The real question is that the Powers have come to certain decisions which we trust, if loyally observed, will ensure a permanent settlement. In the interests of peace it is essential that the Powers make it clearly understood to the two litigants (Turkey and Greece) that these decisions must be respected—if they do so there is every probability that both litigants will bow to the decisions. If the Powers are not in accord on this point, then neither litigant would regard the 'decisions' as more than mere "recommendations," and it would not be consistent with the dignity of the Powers nor conducive to peace for such an interpretation to prevail. It would in such circum[stan]ces be better to abstain from making any commun[icatio]n at Athens or Const[antino]ple.

A. N.

E. G.

⁽³⁾ [*v. infra*, p. 216, No. 228, and *note* (1).]

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 196-7, Nos. 210-1.]

No. 224.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir R. Rodd.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 4525/98/14/44.

Tel. (No. 21.)

Foreign Office, February 2, 1914, 1 p.m.

Your telegram No. 18 (of January 31⁽²⁾): *Ægean Islands*).

I have fully explained my view of the position to the Italian ambassador and recorded our conversation in a despatch which went to you by bag on Jan[uary] 30.⁽³⁾ This will enable you to reply to the several points raised.

As regards the Italian application for concession at Adalia,⁽⁴⁾ I was compelled to ask Turkish gov[ernmen]t for information owing to persistent refusal of Italian Govern-

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Constantinople (No. 53).]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 205-6, No. 220.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 203-4, No. 217.]

⁽⁴⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp. 168-71, No. 185. The concession was for exclusive rights in connection with railway and harbour works.]

ment to tell me what the concession was they were pressing Turkey to grant, so that it was made impossible for me to know whether such concession conflicted with the rights of the British company or not.

I have repeatedly stated that H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] were in no way opposed to any Italian concessions which did not violate British rights, and I should have thought that by leaving Italian concessionnaires to come to an amicable arrangement with the British company direct, so as to eliminate any conflict of interests, H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] have given best proof of the absence from their mind of any intention of obstructing Italian plans. Indeed but for a desire to maintain friendship with Italy, I should have continued to oppose any concession so close to vested interests of Smyrna-Aidin R[ailwa]y Co[mpany], and as it is I can hardly inform the Turkish Gov[ernmen]t that H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] have no objection to the Italian concession until the arrangement with the British Co[mpany] has been settled to their satisfaction.

I see no reason why Minister for Foreign Affairs should not speak generally in above sense in answer to the interpellation.

No. 225.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 4568/98/14/44.

Tel. (No. 36.)

Foreign Office, February 2, 1914, 3.45 P.M.

Your tel[egram] No. 14 of Jan[uary] 31⁽²⁾ (So[uthern] Albania and Ægean Islands).

I purposely worded sentence including "aussitôt que possible" so as to leave it open to Italy to propose a date. I thought Italy would probably want another date and if so would propose one herself. I could hardly propose a new date without consulting Italy and Austria beforehand and this would have delayed my whole reply.

Attribution of Islands to Greece must of course be conditional upon her evacuation of territory assigned to Albania and I shall not object to wording to make this clear.

To pass over Italian reply about Dodecanese without some observation might have given rise to misapprehension and statement that occupation of Ægean Islands by a Great Power is abnormal is mere statement of fact and not a reproach. I think the word "abnormal" must have a more offensive effect when translated than it has in English.

My view on last point in your telegram is that forcible measures to make a decision respected involve much odium and that H[is] M[ajesty's] Gov[ernmen]t would not desire to incur this either as regards Greece or Turkey unless all the Powers act together.

It seems undesirable for Powers to announce further decisions unless they agree to enforce them. In this case international naval action in Greek waters would enforce decision respecting Southern frontier of Epirus and international naval action could easily prevent Turks from occupying islands. But we could not be a party to enforcing either decision in case of necessity unless Powers all agree to join in enforcing both decisions.

I should raise no objection to any arrangement arrived at voluntarily between Greece and Turkey to modify decision of Powers by exchanging Islands.

I approve what you have said and you can speak again to M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] in sense of this telegram.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to the Embassies and to Constantinople.]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 210-1, No. 222.]

No. 226.

*Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾**Constantinople, February 2, 1914.*

F.O. 4848/98/14/44.

D. 9.35 P.M.

Tel. (No. 78.)

R. 11.45 P.M.

Grand Vizier asked me to telegraph to you his great surprise on learning that His Majesty's Government had again taken a hostile initiative against Turkey by proposing a naval demonstration to compel them to accept Powers' decision, thus closing door on amicable solution with Greece.

His Highness added that Germany, Italy, and Austria had fortunately saved the situation by refusing your proposal.

He asked me to assure you that the Porte had no intention of going to war, and that they would do their best to come to a direct understanding with Greece on the basis of exchange of islands.

He hoped that you would not prevent this solution by giving promises of support to Greece, which would make them intractable, but that, if possible, you would assist them in arriving at a compromise.

He added that in Berlin M. Venizelos had not received so much encouragement as in other capitals.

His Highness spoke at length of sinister change in British policy as regards Turkey, and I hear from my colleagues that his language is stronger to them on the subject than to me. I merely said that I was ignorant of any proposal for naval demonstration, and promised to transmit his observations and request.

MINUTES.

Q[uer]y. No answer to the Grand Vizier who seems to live in a state of recurrent ebullition.

R. G. V.

Feb[ruary] 3.

In my humble opinion the time has come for some plain speaking to the Triple Alliance and at Constantinople.

It is clear from the Grand Vizier's language that he has been coached by one of the Triple Alliance embassies and we are fast falling back into the old division at Constantinople. I think we should say that this means the end of co-operation and that we shall withdraw altogether, unless the Powers are going to act in real unison.

G. R. C.

3.ii.14.

I agree with Mr. Clerk's view, and submit herewith a draft telegram to the Ambassadors at Berlin, Vienna and Rome.⁽²⁾

E. A. C.

Feb[ruary] 3.

We are telegraphing to the capitals of the Triple Alliance on the subject. We should await their replies or explanations and then we can consider what further communication should be made.

A. N.

I am entirely with Sir E. Crowe in spirit but I will wait now to see what comes of what I have already said.

E. G.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Paris (as No. 42); to St. Petersburg (as No. 60); to Vienna (as No. 23); to Rome (as No. 26); to Berlin (as No. 38).]

⁽²⁾ [Not reproduced. *cp. infra*, p. 217, No. 229, which was drafted by Sir Edward Grey.]

No. 227.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir L. Mallet.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 5176/98/14/44.

(No. 66.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 2, 1914.

The Turkish Ambassador made an enquiry about the *Ægean* Islands to-day.

Sir Arthur Nicolson and I informed him that the proposition we had made to the Powers contained nothing new, but was founded upon decisions come to at the Conference of Ambassadors last Summer. We wished to know whether the Powers still adhered to those decisions. If all of them did so, we should join with them in making a communication in Constantinople and Athens. But we ourselves had no special interests in the matter, and whether we made a communication would depend upon whether all the Powers were agreed.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

(¹) [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

No. 228.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir L. Mallet.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 4848/98/14/44.

Tel. (No. 60.)

Foreign Office, February 3, 1914, 4 P.M.

Your tel[egram] No. 78 (of February 2nd)⁽²⁾ (S[outhern] Albania and *Ægean* Islands).

My telegram No. 43⁽³⁾ will enable you to inform Grand Vizier of what our actual proposal was and my telegram No. 36⁽⁴⁾ to Sir E. Goschen repeated to you will give you sufficient information to show that we have not proposed any differential action as between Turkey and Greece respecting Islands and Albanian frontier, nor have I desired to prevent a direct understanding between Greece and Turkey.

The Powers came to a certain decision about the Islands and Albanian frontier in the summer: I am prepared to abide by that decision, if the Powers adhere to it and are prepared to make it respected. I have no special interest in pressing the question upon the Powers, but they must come to a decision one way or the other and I regard question of Albanian frontier and islands as inseparably connected and have treated both exactly alike.

I have not yet received any official reply from the Gov[ernmen]ts of Germany, Italy and Austria Hungary to my Note of Jan[uary] 23⁽⁵⁾ and am unaware whether they accept or refuse my proposal which relates to the southern frontier of Albania as well as to the Islands.⁽⁶⁾

(¹) [This telegram was repeated to Paris (Nos. 43-4); to St. Petersburg (Nos. 61-2); with instructions to "inform M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs]."⁽²⁾ It was repeated also to Vienna (Nos. 24-5); to Rome (Nos. 27-8); to Berlin (Nos. 39-40); for "information only."]

(²) [*v. supra*, p. 215, No. 226.]

(³) [*v. supra*, p. 196, No. 210.]

(⁴) [*v. supra*, p. 214, No. 225, and note (¹).]

(⁵) [*v. supra*, pp. 196-8, No. 211, and *encls.*]

(⁶) [The final paragraph of the telegram was added as the result of the following note by Sir A. Nicolson:—

"Sir Edward Grey,

February 3, 1914.

I would point out that the Triple Alliance have let it be known at Constantinople that they refuse any action in case the decision of the Powers is not respected. This has been done before they have even replied officially to your note and proposed declarations. I think, therefore, that we should add to your telegram to Sir L. Mallet 'I have not yet received any official reply from the Gov[ernmen]ts of Germany, Italy and Austria-Hungary to my circular telegram of [January 23] and am unaware whether they accept or refuse my proposal which relates to the Southern frontier of Albania as well as to the Islands.' . . . A. N." The remainder of this note comprised the draft of the immediately succeeding document. It is minuted by Sir Edward Grey: "I approve. E. G."]

No. 229.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 4848/98/14/44.

Tel. (No. 41.)

*Foreign Office, February 3, 1914, 4 p.m.*My telegram to Rome No. 28 of Feb[ruary] 3rd⁽²⁾: *Ægean Islands.*

You should take an early opportunity of stating to M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] the following

The Grand Vizier has expressed to H[is] M[ajesty's] Ambass[ado]r his great surprise that H[is] M[ajesty's] Gov[ernmen]t had taken the initiative in proposing a naval demonstration against Turkey to compel her to accept the decision of the Powers, and that the Triple Alliance had saved the situation by refusing such a proposal.⁽³⁾ As I have not yet received any official reply either negative or affirmative from the Triple Alliance to my note of Jan[uary] 23rd⁽³⁾ I do not understand whence the Grand Vizier has derived his information.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Vienna (No. 26); to Rome (No. 29); to Constantinople (No. 67).]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document, and note ⁽¹⁾.]

⁽³⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 215, No. 226.]

⁽⁴⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 196-8, No. 211, and *encls.*]

No. 230.

Sir R. Rodd to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 5562/98/14/44.

(No. 52.) Confidential.

Rome, D. February 3, 1914.

Sir,

R. February 7, 1914.

I have the honour to report that the Secretary General of the Italian Foreign Office this morning said to me that in Paris there still appeared to be some misgiving that Italy had designs on the retention of some of the islands in her occupation. As a matter of fact, he said, Italy would now herself desire to see the whole question of the evacuation settled and done with as soon as possible, for a reason which was logical and clear to those who really understood the political situation. It was evident that the indefinite prolongation of the situation, which had arisen under quite different circumstances to those which had occasioned the occupations of Cyprus and Egypt, and was conditioned by definite engagements, would entail claims being put forward by others in Syria or elsewhere, and might in fact accelerate the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire in Asia. With the situation which such an eventuality would entail, Italy was quite unprepared to cope, and therefore it was her interest to dispose as quickly as possible of any issues which might precipitate a crisis.

I have, &c.

RENNELL RODD.

No. 231.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 5676/98/14/44.

(No. 58.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 4, 1914.

I told the French Ambassador to-day of the statements made by Herr von Jagow to M. Venizelos and to Sir E. Goschen. that Germany would not participate in any coercive measures against Turkey with regard to the *Ægean Islands*.⁽²⁾ I told him also

• ⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 211-3, No. 223]

what the Grand Vizier had said about a naval demonstration, as reported in Sir L. Mallet's telegram, number : 78 of the 2nd instant.⁽³⁾

On all this, I observed that I could not treat the question of the Albanian frontier separately from the question of the *Ægean* Islands. If Greece and Turkey came to a voluntary arrangement about the Islands under which, for instance, Chios and Mytilene would be given to Turkey, while Greece received some of the Dodecanese in exchange, I should have no objection to make—in this M. Cambon concurred—but I could not join in putting pressure on Greece about the Albanian frontier unless all the Powers were prepared, if it became necessary, to do the same to Turkey on behalf of Greece about the Islands. I did not think that the Great Powers should announce a decision about the Albanian frontier and the Islands unless they intended to make that decision respected. I would wait for the reply of the Triple Alliance respecting the proposed communication in Athens and Constantinople, but this was my view.

M. Cambon entirely agreed in this attitude. He doubted whether the Triple Alliance would make any reply, and it was better that they should not do so, rather than that they should refuse definitely to take part in any measures to make the decision respected.

I said that we had no particular interest in hurrying on the evacuation of Epirus by Greece, and if the Powers who were most interested in seeing that carried out delayed their reply, and thereby delayed a joint communication in Athens and Constantinople, it was their own affair.

[I am, &c.]

E. G. [REY].

(3) [*v. supra*, p. 215, No. 226.]

No. 232.

Sir E. Goschen to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 5885/98/14/44.

Tel. (No. 16.)

Berlin, February 5, 1914.

Your telegram No. 41 of 3rd February⁽²⁾ acted on yesterday evening, when the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs told me that, in speaking to His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, Grand Vizier had based his remarks on the press, which had been very busy on the subject of naval demonstration. To-day his Excellency asked me to visit him, and informed me that on the 30th January German representative at Constantinople had reported that Talaat Bey had told him that he had heard from Paris that England was pressing the Powers to join in naval demonstration.⁽³⁾ Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had at once telegraphed to German representative that he had received no proposal of that kind from His Majesty's Government. In telling me this, his Excellency requested that it might be regarded as a confidential communication; he had only given it to me in order that you might know that it was not on information from Germany that the Grand Vizier had based his observations to Sir L. Mallet.

His Excellency reminded me that while in Berlin M. Venizelos had spoken very freely not only to him but to everybody else on the subject of a naval demonstration,⁽³⁾ the idea of which had apparently been suggested to him by M. Tittoni. He added that M. Venizelos had informed him that he had spoken to you on the subject,⁽⁴⁾ and that you had advised him to mention it at Berlin, as His Majesty's Government would not join in such an action unless the other Powers did so. M. Venizelos had been informed in reply that the Imperial Government objected in principle to naval demonstrations, and would not be likely to take part in one.

(1) [The text given above is taken from the *Confidential Print*, as the original decypher cannot be traced. This telegram was sent to Constantinople (as No. 71).]

(2) [*v. supra*, p. 217, No. 229.]

(3) [*cp. supra*, pp. 211-3, No. 223, and *min.*; p. 215, No. 226; *cp. also infra*, p. 221, *Ed. note*.]

(4) [*cp. infra*, p. 222, No. 235.]

Secretary of State finally said that he was sure you would understand that he had been perfectly loyal in this matter, adding that incorrect versions of M. Venizelos's conversations, here and elsewhere, which had probably been discussed at Constantinople between diplomats and Turkish statesmen, were, without doubt, at the root of the misunderstanding.

[*ED. NOTE.*—Sir R. Rodd's telegram (No. 26), D. February 4, 1914, 10.25 P.M., R. February 5, 11.55 A.M., and Sir M. de Bunsen's telegram (No. 19) of February 4, 1914, D. 8.15 P.M., R. 9.40 P.M., contained replies to Sir Edward Grey's enquiries from Rome and Vienna virtually identical with the German reply given in the immediately preceding document (F.O. 5281/98/14/44; F.O. 5187/98/14/44.) *cp. infra*, p. 221, *Ed. note.*]

No. 233.

Note by Sir A. Nicolson.

F.O. 6110/98/14/44.

Sir Edward Grey.

February 6, 1914.

The Austro-Hungarian, German and Italian Ambassadors called to-day,⁽¹⁾ independently of each other, to inform me verbally that their Gov[ernmen]ts accepted the terms of the declarations to be made at Constantinople and at Athens, with certain modifications to be made in the latter declaration, and which I have underlined in the enclosed copy left by Prince Lichnowsky.⁽²⁾ The "enclosed document" is what is termed the Florence Protocol.⁽³⁾

I asked the Ambassadors severally whether they had anything to say as to the accord to be established, preparatory to the communication of the declarations, among the Powers that they would, if necessary, take measures to make their decisions respected.

They severally replied that their Gov[ernmen]ts considered that it would be better to await the replies from Constantinople and Athens—and that then the Powers would be in a position to discuss, judging from the nature of the replies, what further proceedings, if any, should be taken.

I pointed out, speaking quite personally, that there seemed to me some practical difficulties in such a procedure—supposing Greece accepted without demur the decisions, and was ready to evacuate Epirus and to retrocede to Turkey Imbros and Tenedos; and that Turkey gave an evasive reply or raised points for discussion. Were the Powers to enter into a discussion with Turkey which might be prolonged until the latter felt herself strong enough to endeavour to regain the islands of Scio and Mitylene? Would the Powers be ready to insist if Greece loyally fulfilled her obligation that Turkey should loyally abide by the decisions of the Powers? It seemed to me that the Powers before making the declarations should have agreed among themselves that they would see that the decisions were respected by *both* parties—and not only by one.—These were merely personal remarks.—My real reply was that I would communicate to you what they had been instructed to tell me—and that I had reminded them of the condition which you had laid down before delivering the declarations. I added that of course we should have to communicate with Paris and St. Petersburg.

(I am sure Germany will not, on principle, exercise any real pressure on Turkey—and that Italy will not do so either for fear of losing her concessions—and the Italian Ambass[ado]r said that Turkey had already threatened to withhold giving any concession if Italy were to be disagreeable. This threat, I remarked, showed that Turkey had an *arrière pensée* to take her own line, when the moment arrived.)

A. N.

(¹) [*cp. infra*, p. 222, No. 237. *cp. also G.P.*, XXXVI (II), pp. 495-6; *Ö-U.A.*, VII, pp. 836-7, No. 9310; *Imperialismus*, 1st Ser., Vol. I, p. 186, No. 201.]

(²) [A copy of the text of this declaration to be made at Athens as proposed by the Triple Alliance was sent by post to all the Embassies on February 10. (F.O. 6110/98/14/44.)]

(³) [*cp. supra*, p. 82, No. 98, and *note* (¹).]

Enclosure in No. 233.

Amended declaration to be made at Athens.

. . . .⁽⁴⁾ The definitive allocation to Greece of the islands which the Powers have decided should be left in her possession will only become effective after the Greek troops have evacuated the territories assigned according to the enclosed document to Albania as well as the island of Sasseno and when the Greek Government have formally undertaken to offer no resistance, and not to support or encourage, directly or indirectly, resistance of any kind to the order of things which has been established by the Powers in Southern Albania.

L'évacuation commencera le premier mars par la retraite des troupes grecques du Caza de Koritza et de l'île de Sasséno et procédera successivement jusqu'au 31, date à laquelle elle devra finir par le départ des troupes helléniques du Caza de Delwino.

The six Powers confidently trust that the above decisions will be faithfully respected by the Hellenic Government.

MINUTE

I will deal with it on Monday. I wrote something relevant yesterday.

E. G.

7.2.14.

⁽⁴⁾ [The first three paragraphs are omitted here as they are identical with the text given *supra*, p. 198, No. 211, *encl.* 2.]

No. 234.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.

Constantinople, February 7, 1914

F.O. 5715/98/14/44.

D. 12.10 P.M.

Tel. (No. 87.) Confidential.

R. 2.45 P.M.

Your telegram No. 60 of Feb[ruary] 3⁽¹⁾ (S[outhern] Albania and Ægean Islands).

Grand Vizier is ill, but meeting Talaat Bey we spoke about the islands and I explained to him your position and part which His Majesty's Government had played which he understood.

He assured me formally of the peaceful intentions of Turkish Government who, he said, hoped to negotiate with Greece a permanent treaty on the basis of exchange.

As he asked your views I said that you would not be opposed to an exchange or to any peaceful solution. He appeared much pleased but later on said that a negative attitude on His Majesty's Government's part would not be sufficient and he expressed hope that you would help in negotiations for exchange.

He went on to speak of the Dodecanese and Italian demands. I explained your position as regards negotiations between the Company and Nogara which I said seemed to promise hope of an arrangement.⁽²⁾ He said that he did not want to give anything to the Italians as Turkish Government had fulfilled conditions of the treaty of Lausanne and that constant accusations by Italians that Turkish officers were entering Cyrenaica by way of Egypt were unjust. Turkish Government were powerless to prevent individuals from going there but Turkish officers had been strictly forbidden to take part in hostilities.

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 216, No. 228.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp. 168-9, No. 185; p. 204, No. 217; p. 214, No. 224, where reference is made to the Smyrna-Aidin Railway Company. Signor Nogara had come to London to discuss the question. (F.O. 2824/756/14/44.)]

Speaking very confidentially and begging me not to repeat what he said, he told me that the Italian Ambassador was always urging concessions on the ground that Turkey gave them to other countries such as England, who was unfriendly to Turkey, and to France. Talaat had replied that the agreement with England was advantageous to both countries as there had been give and take but that Italy had taken a large province and several islands and was now asking for more offering nothing in exchange.

If Italian Government would give them help towards bringing about a peaceful solution with Greece by means of an exchange of islands then the Turkish Government would see about concession.

MINUTE.

Tewfik P[ash]a spoke to me this aft[ernoon] in the same sense, more or less,—and I answered luckily in the same sense as Sir L. Mallet. We might so inform Sir L. Mallet (see my record in today's pouch). See 6100⁽³⁾

A. N.

Feb[ruary] 7/14.

E. G.

⁽³⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's despatch (No. 80) to Sir L. Mallet of February 16, 1914, recorded Sir A. Nicolson's conversation with Tewfik Pasha on February 7. The despatch is not reproduced as the subject is sufficiently indicated above. (F O 6100/98/14/44.)]

[ED. NOTE.—On February 7, 1914, Sir Edward Grey sent the following telegram to Sir F. Bertie (No. 46) and to Sir G. Buchanan (No. 69) giving instructions with reference to his circular despatch of January 23 (*v. supra*, pp 196-8, No. 211, and *encls.*). Two days previously he had received a telegram (No. 19) from Sir M. de Bunsen, D. February 4, R. February 5, 1914, reporting an interview with Count Berchtold at which the latter had summarized his views on Sir Edward Grey's note and had expressed the opinions cited below. (F.O. 5187/98/14/44.) *cp. supra*, p. 219, *Ed. note*.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.

F.O. 5187/98/14/44.

Tel. (No. 46.)

Foreign Office, February 7, 1914, 4.30 P.M.

My desp[atch] No. ³⁴/₂₉ of Jan[uary] 23.

H[is] M[ajesty's] Amb[assado]r at Vienna telegraphs that Austrian M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] thinks time has not yet come to consider question of possible joint measures of coercion. He suggests that the proposed communication might safely be made at Constantinople and Athens without an agreement existing in regard to it. C[oun]t Berchtold said that all his information from Constantinople pointed to Turkey taking no hostile action for the present. She had everything to gain from waiting till the autumn, when her fleet w[oul]d be strengthened. By that time she w[oul]d perhaps have come to some agreement with Greece, and no coercion w[oul]d be needed.

You sh[oul]d communicate foregoing to ^{French}/_{Russian} M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] and enquire his views.

For the attitude of France and Russia, *v. infra*, pp. 223-4, No. 239.]

No. 235.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 5385/98/14/44.

Tel. (No. 45.)

Foreign Office, February 9, 1914, 3 P.M.

Your tel[egram] No. 16 of Feb[ruary] 5⁽²⁾ (*Ægean Islands*).

Please inform Minister for Foreign Affairs that I unreservedly accept his explanation. In view, however, of the Grand Vizier's categorical statement to Sir L. Mallet that the German, Austrian and Italian governments had saved the situation by refusing a British proposal for a naval demonstration, I trust the German gov[ernmen]t will take some steps at Constantinople to make the truth clear to the

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Constantinople (No. 75)]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 218-9, No. 232.]

Turkish government. You may explain that H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] are naturally much concerned at the revival at Constantinople of those influences which encourage Turkey to resort to the old policy of playing off one group of the Powers against the other, and they cannot remain indifferent when these manifestations take the form of hostility to Great Britain in particular on the strength of false information alleged to be derived from Triple Alliance sources.

M. Venizelos asked me whether I saw objection to his asking the Powers, if they imposed a prohibition of fortifications &c. to guarantee to Greece the peaceful possession of the Islands. I replied that personally I had no objection, but that he had better ascertain the feeling at Berlin before deciding to address a formal request to the Powers. H[is] M[ajesty's] Gov[ernment] did not wish to see the Powers divided into pro-Turkish and pro-Greek groups some guaranteeing the Islands and others not and we should not join in a guarantee unless all Powers did so. Naval demonstration was not mentioned so far as I recollect.

No. 236.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir L. Mallet.

F.O. 5385/98/14/44.

Tel. (No. 75.)

Foreign Office, February 9, 1914, 3.20 P.M.

Your tel[egram] No. 78.⁽¹⁾

You will see from the replies which I have received from Berlin, Rome and Vienna that the Gov[ernment]s deny having given any grounds for the statement of the G[ran]d Vizier.⁽²⁾ You should speak to the G[ran]d Vizier in the general sense of the replies which have been received.

⁽¹⁾ [*v supra*, p. 215, No. 226.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 217, No. 229; pp. 218-9, No. 232; p. 219, *Ed. note.*]

No. 237.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 6110/98/14/44.

Tel. (No. 48.)

Foreign Office, February 9, 1914, 10.30 P.M.

Ambassadors of triple alliance made separate verbal communications here on Feb[ruary] 6 to the effect that their governments accepted the terms of the declarations to be made at Constantinople and Athens⁽²⁾ which I had proposed, with certain modifications as regards the Albanian frontier, which would be defined in the declaration as the line laid down in the Florence protocol of the South Albanian delimitation Commission,⁽³⁾ and also contain the following paragraph:

“L'évacuation commencera le premier mars par la retraite des troupes grecques du Caza de Koritza et de l'île de Sasséno, et procédera successivement jusqu'au 31 mars, date à laquelle elle devra finir par le départ des troupes helléniques du Caza de Delvino.”

Replying to enquiry what their governments proposed to do, as regards an agreement between the Powers that they would if necessary take measures to make their decisions respected, the Ambassadors replied that it would be better to await the answers of the Turkish and Greek governments, after which the Powers would be in a position to discuss which course further proceedings should follow.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Berlin (No. 46); to Vienna (No. 28); to Rome (No. 32); to St. Petersburg (No. 74); to Constantinople (No. 76); to Athens (No. 20).]

⁽²⁾ [*v supra*, p. 198, No. 211, *encl.*; pp. 219-20, No. 233, and *encl.*]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 82, No. 98, and *note* ⁽¹⁾; p. 219, No. 233.]

No. 238.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 6110/98/14/44.

Tel. (No. 49.)

*Foreign Office, February 9, 1914, 11 P.M.*My immediately preceding telegram.⁽²⁾

I agree to the terms now suggested for the communications at Athens and Constantinople, but before definitely deciding to make the communications. I think the Powers ought to consider the position in which they will be placed if Greece, who is the State required to take positive action to comply with decision of the Powers, refuses to accept that decision or makes acceptance of that decision conditional upon an undertaking by the Powers to secure to her the peaceable possession of the Islands after the evacuation of Epirus is complete.

In this event the Powers will have either to give the undertaking required or to resort to coercive measures against Greece or to allow their decision about the Albanian frontier to be ineffective.

It [is] M[ajesty's] Gov[ernment] would be prepared to join in measures to make decision about S[outhern] Albanian frontier effective if all the Powers did so, but only on the understanding that all the Powers would also join if necessary later on in making the decision about the Islands respected.

It seems to me that we all risk being placed in a difficult position if we communicate officially to other States decisions without any agreement between ourselves whether we will insist upon the decisions being respected.

You should point out this difficulty to M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] and ask for his views.

You should also say to M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] that I do not desire to preclude either a voluntary arrangement between Turkey and Greece by way of exchange of Islands, such as I believe has been suggested in some quarters, or some rectification of S[outhern] Albanian frontier after our communication at Athens by voluntary agreement between Austria Italy and Greece such as I understand M. Venizelos mentioned at Rome and elsewhere.⁽³⁾

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Berlin (No. 47); to Vienna (No. 29); to St. Petersburg (No. 75); to Rome (No. 33); it was repeated to Constantinople (No. 77); to Athens (No. 21), "for information only."]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

⁽³⁾ [cp. *supra*, pp. 184-5, No. 199.]

No. 239.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 6110/98/14/44.

Tel. (No. 50.)

Foreign Office, February 9, 1914, 11.30 P.M.

French Ambassador informs me that French and Russian Gov[ernment]s consider that we should all join in making suggested communications about S[outhern] Albanian frontier and Islands immediately at Athens and Constantinople.⁽²⁾ They anticipate favourable replies at both places and consider that if later on Turkey has designs upon the Islands her acceptance of the decision of the Powers now will give us a title to restrain her.

I doubt whether Greece will accept without some guarantee about the Islands and whether Turkey will accept without qualification or evasion or *arrière-pensée*. In this

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to St. Petersburg (No. 76).]

⁽²⁾ [cp. *infra*, pp. 226-7, No. 244; p. 230, No. 249.]

event France Russia and Great Britain may be placed in the disagreeable position after having joined in communications at Athens and Constantinople of refusing to enforce the decision about S[outhern] Albanian frontier and of being left alone to enforce it as regards the Islands.

I have therefore suggested for consideration by all the Powers the points put forward in my immediately preceding circular telegram.⁽³⁾

You should explain this to M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs].

(3) [v. immediately preceding document.]

No. 240.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir L. Mallet.

Private.⁽¹⁾

My dear Mallet,

London, February 9, 1914.

Your letter of the 28th of January⁽²⁾ shows the possibility of very untoward developments.

It seems madness for the Turks, in their present financial situation, to boycott and suppress Greek traders in Turkey; and a chauvinist policy will bring Turkey down again.

I do not see how the financial situation is to be relieved. No money can be obtained except in Paris, and I do not believe that money would be obtained there if it was not that the French have invested so much money in Turkey that they cannot afford to let her collapse. But a country cannot be kept afloat by continual loans, unless they are spent on reproductive purposes with some prospect of bringing about a balance of revenue and expenditure.

A Pan-Islamic, anti-Greek, military and naval spirit is a luxury in which Turkey cannot afford to indulge. But it is rare that individuals learn by experience in public affairs. The individuals now in power in Turkey are the same as brought her to catastrophe by a chauvinist policy, and they will continue to do after their kind. When a country has learnt by experience, it changes the rulers who have brought it to trouble.

There is, however, nothing for us to do but to wait upon events. One cannot help being touched by the disposition of the Turks to turn to us; but we cannot put money upon them again in the sense of having rows with other Powers on their behalf.

I fear that Crawford's position must be very difficult, owing to the financial strain, but I cannot help to get money from London, and Paris is the only hope.

Yours sincerely,

E. GREY.

⁽¹⁾ [Grey MSS., Vol. 41.]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 204-5, No. 218.]

No. 241.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 6801/98/14/44.

Constantinople, D. February 10, 1914, 8 P.M.

Tel. (No. 95.)

R. February 11, 1914, 12.45 P.M.

Djemal Bey called this morning and asked me to represent to you his anxiety lest resolution on the part of the Powers to enforce decision affecting islands should prevent possibility of a settlement with Greece. I explained to him frankly

your position in this question and its connection with the Epirus frontier and your reluctance to announce decisions if they were not respected. I said at the same time you would certainly not oppose direct understanding with Greece.

He begged me to propose to you that the Powers should give their decision and at the same time let it be known that they would be favourable to a direct understanding with Greece if the decision were not viewed favourably by Turkey and Greece. The Powers would then assist in negotiations which would follow.⁽¹⁾

I asked what guarantees there were that war would not ensue. He replied that he felt certain that with the assistance of the Powers a solution could be found and he said that Turkey had not thought of war. He was persuaded that another war would ruin Turkey and he intended to devote all his energies to the reform and regeneration of Turkish Empire and for that object peace was necessary. I said I believed his good intentions but others might not be so prudent, that Albanian adventures, purchase of battle-ships, threats in press and recent incidents in Paris connected with Cherif Pasha had bred distrust of Turkish Government. He assured me on his word of honour that he would leave the Cabinet if they thought of war. Battle-ships had been bought to forestall Greece. He was absolutely innocent of any foreknowledge of Paris incident.

MINUTE.

We have already contemplated an intimation to Turkey that H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] would not be opposed to a direct understanding with Turkey. But, as Sir E. Grey pointed out, such an intimation is exceedingly likely to be construed by the Turkish government as a consent on the part of England to their bullying Greece into the relinquishment of her islands. In these circumstances the remarks already made by Sir L. Mallet may well be considered sufficient.

Qu[ery]: So inform Sir L. Mallet when a decision has been come to regarding the general question.

E. A. C.
Feb[ruary] 11.
E. G.

⁽¹⁾ [*cp. infra*, p. 226, No. 243; p. 230, No. 249.]

No. 242.

Sir E. Goschen to Sir Edward Grey.

Berlin, February 10, 1914.

F.O. 6190/98/14/44.

Tel. (No. 20.)

D. 8.30 P.M.

R. 10 P.M.

Your telegram No. 45 of Feb[ruary] 9⁽¹⁾ acted on.

Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs at once drafted a telegram to German representative at Constantinople stating that it was untrue that His Majesty's Government had made a proposal involving naval demonstration, and desiring him to take an opportunity of making this clear to the Ottoman Government.

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 221-2, No. 235.]

No. 243.

*Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.**St. Petersburg, February 10, 1914.*

F.O. 6189/98/14/44.

D. 8.45 P.M.

Tel. (No. 45.)

R. 10.15 P.M.

I read to Minister for Foreign Affairs to-day⁽¹⁾ memorandum embodying your telegrams Nos. 48 and 49 of Feb[ruary] 9⁽²⁾ to Paris and your telegram No. 76 of Feb[ruary] 9.⁽³⁾ He said that he could not undertake to join in coercive measures against Greece, as he would never be able to obtain Emperor's consent to such a course. Greece had already accepted the decision of the Powers, and one could not threaten a man who had promised to do what he was told to.

I urged him not to add to our difficulties by refusing to join in whatever measures might be necessary to impose respect for decision of the Powers on both Greece and Turkey. It would greatly strengthen your position in approaching the German Government on the question of action which the Powers should take in the event of Turkey making difficulties about giving up the islands were you able to state that the Triple *Entente* was willing to act in the same way towards Greece should she refuse to evacuate Epirus. It would place Germany in the wrong were she then to refuse to co-operate with us in coercive measures against Turkey, whereas his Excellency was placing the Triple *Entente* in the wrong by making a distinction between the two cases. Minister for Foreign Affairs replied that Germany had already as good as said that she would not use force against Turkey. It was useless for us to think of trying to persuade her to do so. He was also quite certain that French Government would never join in coercing Greece. The only thing for us to do was to make the proposed communication at Athens and Constantinople. We should at the same time tell Turks confidentially that refusal to give up the islands would have serious consequences, and that we were only asking them to fulfil engagement which they took when they left the decision respecting the islands in the hands of the Powers. If Greeks asked us to guarantee their peaceful possession of the islands, we should ask the Powers to join us in such a guarantee. If Triple Alliance refused to join in eventual coercive measures against Turkey we must act alone and send our ships to Chios. Russia was not interested in the question whether islands belonged to Greece or Turkey, but having taken decision we must enforce it whether Triple Alliance joined us or not. If we failed to do so Triple *Entente* would no longer count as an international factor. Turks would lose all respect for us, as they only respected force, and they would yield at once as soon as they knew we were in earnest.

(1) [M. Sazonov sent a telegram to Count Benckendorff on this subject on February 10. *Imperialismus*, 1st Ser, Vol. I, pp. 206-7, No. 215.]

(2) [*v. supra*, pp. 222-3, Nos. 237-8.]

(3) [*v. supra*, pp. 223-4, No. 239, and note (1).]

No. 244.

Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 6279/98/14/44.

Paris, D. February 10, 1914, 10 P.M.

Tel. (No. 17.)

R. February 11, 1914, 12.5 P.M.

Your telegrams Nos. 49 and 50 of February 9th⁽¹⁾: South Albanian Frontier and the Aegean Islands.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs' information is that the Greek President of the Council wishes the communication to be made at Athens so as to strengthen his hands in view of the preparations being made by the sacred bands to cause disturbances; and that the Turks are taking advantage of the delay in the communication to intrigue concerning the islands.

(1) [*v. supra*, pp. 223-4, Nos. 238-9.]

The French Minister for Foreign Affairs thinks that France, England and Russia in consenting to join with the Triple Alliance in making the communications at Athens and Constantinople without a preliminary agreement as to the measures to cause the decisions of the Powers to be respected, should take note of the fact that Austria and Italy and Germany do not refuse to join such measures, but only postpone the consideration of the question until after receipt of replies from the Greek and Turkish Governments.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs says that if negotiations were begun now for coercion, which possibly may never be required, there would at all events be great delay and possibly no result and meanwhile precious time would be lost, for the giving of the notices to Greece and Turkey of which delay Greek bands and Turkish Government would take advantage to the danger of a peaceable solution of both questions.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs' information from Bucharest is that the King of Roumania will not tolerate a disturbance of the Bucharest Treaty by Turco-Bulgarian action and that the Roumanian Minister for Foreign Affairs has given a severe warning to that effect to the Turkish Minister.

The French Military Attaché at Constantinople reports that there are no warlike desires in the army at present.

The French Minister for Foreign Affairs says that after the acceptance by Greece and Turkey of the decisions of the Powers in regard to the islands, it will be open to the Greek and Turkish Governments to come to an arrangement to modify those decisions.

MINUTES.

We have placed our views very fully and clearly before the Powers—and they do not agree with them—and are all desirous or anxious, for various reasons, that the declarations at Athens and Constantinople should not be delayed—We cannot well stand apart—and we should agree, while taking note, as M. Doumergue suggests, of the assurance of the Triple Alliance that when the replies arrive the question of coercive measures, if necessary, should be considered.

I will deal with it to-morrow.⁽²⁾

A. N.

E. G.
11.2.14.

(2) [*v. infra*, p. 230, No. 249.]

No. 245.

Sir E. Goschen to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 6811/98/14/14.

Tel. (No. 22.)

Berlin, D. February 10, 1914, 11.32 P.M.

R. February 11, 1914, 1.15 P.M.

Your telegram No. 47 of Feb[ruary] 9⁽¹⁾ acted upon and aide-memoire left with the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

With regard to your statement that His Majesty's Government would be prepared to join in measures to make the decisions about South Albania effective, His Excellency said that he was quite sure that no measures would be required in the case of Greece and nearly sure that Turkey would confine herself to a protest and that in her case also no coercion would be needed. I said that there were perhaps strong probabilities but no certainties and that in any case it was your view that no risks should be run and that the Powers should have a plan cut and dried for every eventuality. He replied that as he had from the first refused the Austrian and Italian proposals to threaten Greece with coercive measures with regard to evacuation he could certainly not come forward with any such proposals now and he suggested that, as you were anxious that the Powers should concert together on the subject, you might give them some idea of what measures you thought suitable. I said that it might not

(1) [*v. supra*, p. 223, No. 238, and note (1).]

appear to you to be a very grateful task to take the initiative in making proposals to which from what he had said the Imperial Government appeared almost certain to object and that you were obviously endeavouring to obtain the views of all the Powers on the main principle before making any definite suggestion. He then repeated his view that to devise any measures for enforcing decision of the Powers was unnecessary either in the case of Greece or Turkey.

In subsequent conversation he admitted fear of what Russia might propose as regards Turkey was one of his reasons for objecting to any concerted action such as you desire.

No. 246.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 6586/98/14/44.

(No. 49.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 10, 1914.

Count Benckendorff explained to me to-day the Russian view that the refusal of Germany to participate in measures that might become necessary to make the decision of the Powers, about the *Ægean Islands*, respected by Turkey should not prevent us from enforcing the decision; the "Triple Entente" could easily do so alone.

I said that no doubt this could be done, but it would put Germany in the position of being able to exploit the situation in Constantinople to our disadvantage.

Count Benckendorff seemed aware, personally, of the force of this argument, but he said that M. Sazonof's view was that German abstention should not be allowed to block action.

I said that it must be remembered that, in this case, Germany would be blocking the decision about the southern frontier of Albania as well as the decision about the *Ægean Islands*. The position really was that the Triple Alliance came to us, and asked us to get Greece to agree to the decision about the Albanian frontier. We were prepared to do this, provided that the Triple Alliance would promise to do their part about the Islands. For us to agree to do what the Triple Alliance wished in Athens, and to let them off doing what we wished about the Islands, would not seem to be fair. I thought it reasonable that, if Greece was made to retire from Epirus, she should have the islands in question; but there was no great British interest involved in seeing that the islands went to Greece rather than to Turkey. So long as no Great Power obtained any of them, it was not a great matter for British interests whether Turkey or Greece had them. An analogous case was that of Crete, where Germany and Austria had been allowed to stand aside, and the other four Powers had had an infinity of trouble without any benefit to themselves.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

No. 247.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Private.⁽²⁾

Dear Sir Edward,

Constantinople, February 10, 1914.

I will not trouble you with a long letter but I should like you to know that I lose no occasion when I meet the more prominent members of the Government of

⁽¹⁾ [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to the Prime Minister.]

⁽²⁾ [Grey MSS., Vol. 41.]

impressing upon them the necessity of preserving peace even at great sacrifices. Talaat and Djemal are both reasonable to all appearances and abound in the sense of my rather governessy advice. I cannot help feeling confidence in the straightforwardness of both Talaat and Djemal, especially the latter who always impresses me as an honest man. I may be quite wrong. I believe that if some face-saving arrangement could be found for them in regard to the islands they would accept it now, but it will be very hard for them to sit down under the present decision in view of all that they and their friends have said on the subject. I have often explained your role in these negotiations and always interrupt and correct the Grand Vizier when he speaks of "la proposition anglaise." But I fear that the impression will remain for some time that we have taken a harsh line with them and sacrificed their interests with a view to propitiating Greece. They always return to that. My personal relations with all of them are as friendly as possible and I can tell them what I think—as they do not bear personal malice. The Grand Vizier is enchanted at the conclusion of the Armenian reforms negotiation and is now sacrificing two sheep on his own account and two contributed by the Russian Chargé d'Affaires to mark his satisfaction at this epoch-making event. . . .⁽³⁾

Yours sincerely,
LOUIS MALLET.

⁽³⁾ [The rest of this letter refers to the Inspectors to be appointed for Armenia. It adds nothing of importance to information given *infra*, pp. 542-8, *passim*.]

No. 248.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.

Constantinople, February 11, 1914.

F.O. 6828/98/14/44.

D. 8.30 P.M.

Tel. (No. 97.)

R. 11.30 P.M.

I visited Grand Vizier to-day at his private house, to which he is confined through illness, and I carried out instructions in your telegram No. 75 of 9th February.⁽¹⁾ I explained to him your attitude from the commencement of this discussion. I said that you had no special interest in the question and were certainly not actuated by sentiments of hostility to Turkey.

The decision of the Powers had been taken in the summer. You had acted as mouthpiece of the Conference, and it was unjust to call proposal specially British. Questions of Albanian frontier and of islands had always been taken together, and you had from the first held the view that if the Powers announced decisions at Athens and Constantinople they should be prepared to see them respected. Your attitude to Greece and Turkey was exactly similar. You had told the Powers that you could not use force against Greece without using it against Turkey, and unless all the Powers did the same. There had been no new note proposing a naval demonstration against Turkey, and you had been surprised to hear from me that his Highness had been so misinformed as to your action and intentions. You had made enquiries at Berlin, Rome and Vienna in order to ascertain how this information had reached his Highness, and had received replies admitting that no such proposal had been made by you.

In one of these replies it had been suggested that his Highness had acquired his information from the press.⁽²⁾

His Highness exclaimed that he never read the papers, and that in any case he would not have based such a communication to me on a newspaper report.

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 222, No. 236, and *note* ⁽²⁾.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp. 218-9, No. 232.]

He was much gratified at my communication and asked me to thank you. He wished to be on the friendliest terms with England. He regretted very much impression which was widespread that England was responsible for the proposal and was now pressing for the use of force; it might create difficulties for him when the Anglo-Turkish Agreement was presented to the Turkish Parliament. He was convinced that he could come to an arrangement with Greece if Powers did not insist on enforcing their decision, which would close door on an amicable solution.

I said that, if force had to be used against Greece, how would it be possible to give different treatment to Turkey? And if there were no agreement amongst Powers to uphold decision, then Turkey might make war on Greece: they had bought a battleship and had used much threatening language, and there had been talk of an adventure in Thrace. Europe was doubtful of Turkey's intentions. His Highness assured me that war was absolutely out of the question. They had bought the battleship to prevent Greece getting her, and as for adventure in Thrace, rumours were entirely false, and had been spread by her enemies to prevent them getting a loan.

No. 249.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 6279/98/14/44.

Tel. (No. 56.)

Foreign Office, February 12, 1914, 12-30 P.M.

As it is the desire of all the Powers to make the communications at Athens and Constantinople immediately, His Majesty's Government, being reluctant to separate from the Powers, have sent instructions to the British Ambassador at Constantinople and the British Minister at Athens to join in the respective communications when all their Colleagues are similarly instructed.

His Majesty's Government do not, however, feel that British interests are involved either in securing the evacuation of Epirus by Greece or in deciding as between Greece and Turkey the ownership of the Islands. The object of His Majesty's Government in promoting this settlement, of which they regard the two parts as interdependent, has been to secure unity between the Powers.

Should there be difficulty in getting either the decision about the Albanian frontier or that about the Islands accepted, His Majesty's Government must not be regarded as committed by the communications now made at Athens and Constantinople to any further steps, unless there be agreement between all the Powers to share the responsibility of making both decisions respected, and failing such agreement His Majesty's Government must reserve their future attitude with respect to these decisions.

You should inform M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] accordingly.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Berlin (No. 50); to Rome (No. 35); to St. Petersburg (No. 81); to Vienna (No. 30). It was repeated also to Athens (Nos. 22-3); to Constantinople (Nos. 85-6) "for information only" *cp.* also immediately succeeding document, *notes* ⁽¹⁾ and ⁽²⁾.]

No. 250.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir L. Mallet.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 6279/98/14/44.

Tel. (No. 87.)

Foreign Office, February 12, 1914, 12.30 p.m.

(S[outhern] Albania and Ægean Islands.)

My immediately preceding telegram.⁽²⁾ You may join your colleagues in presenting collective declaration as now approved by all the six Powers to the government to which you are accredited.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Athens (No. 24).]

⁽²⁾ [Not reproduced. It stated that Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 56) to Sir F. Bertie was "for information only." v. immediately preceding document, and note ⁽¹⁾.]

No. 251.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir L. Mallet.

F.O. 6328/98/14/44.

Tel. (No. 90.)

Foreign Office, February 12, 1914, 8 p.m.

Your telegram No. 97.⁽¹⁾ I approve your language. My object has been to secure agreement between the Powers but to avoid having to put pressure upon Greece to make effective that part of the decision of the Powers in which Austria and Italy were interested without some assurance that we should not be left alone by the Triple Alliance if it were necessary to put pressure upon Turkey subsequently to make the other part of the decision of the Powers effective.

I have therefore joined in the communications at Athens and Constantinople, but reserved our attitude as to possible developments.

⁽¹⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 229-30, No. 248.]

No. 252.

Sir F. Elliot to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 7453/98/14/44.

(No. 88.)

Athens, D. February 18, 1914,

Sir,

R. February 19, 1914.

With reference to your telegram No. 24 of the 13th instant,⁽¹⁾ I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of the collective Note which was drafted at a meeting of the six representatives this morning and was despatched to the Minister for Foreign Affairs at two o'clock.⁽²⁾

I have, &c.

F. ELLIOT.

Enclosure in No. 252.

Collective Note addressed to M. Streit.

Monsieur le Ministre,

Athènes, le 13 février (31 janvier), 1914.

Les soussignés, Ministres d'Allemagne, d'Autriche-Hongrie, de France, de Grande Bretagne, d'Italie et de Russie, ont l'honneur de faire au Gouvernement Royal Hellénique, de la part de leurs Gouvernements, la déclaration suivante⁽³⁾ :—

“ D'après l'Article 5 du Traité de Londres du 17/30 Mai 1913⁽⁴⁾ entre la Turquie et les États alliés Balkaniques, ainsi que par l'Article 15 du Traité signé à Athènes

⁽¹⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 231, No. 250, and note ⁽¹⁾. There is a difficulty as to the date of this telegram.]

⁽²⁾ [For M. Streit's reply, v. *infra*, pp. 235-7, No. 255, and *encl.*]

⁽³⁾ [c.p. *supra*, p. 198, No. 211, *encl.* 2; pp. 219-20, No. 233, and *encl.*]

⁽⁴⁾ [v. *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II), p. 1050, *App.* III.]

entre la Turquie et la Grèce le 1/14 Novembre 1913⁽⁵⁾ le Gouvernement Grec s'est engagé à laisser aux six Puissances le soin de décider du sort des îles de la Mer Égée.

En conséquence, les six Puissances ont décidé de remettre à la Grèce toutes les îles de la Mer Égée actuellement occupées par elles à l'exception de Ténédos et d'Imbros ainsi que de l'île de Castellorizo, qui doivent être restituées à la Turquie. Les Puissances ont, en outre, décidé que, en ce qui concerne les îles assignées à la Grèce, des garanties satisfaisantes devront leur être données ainsi qu'à la Turquie par le Gouvernement Grec que ces îles ne seront ni fortifiées ni utilisées pour aucun but naval ou militaire et que des mesures effectives seront prises en vue de prévenir la contrebande entre les îles et le continent ottoman.

Les six Puissances se sont engagées à user de leur influence sur le Gouvernement grec en vue d'assurer l'exécution loyale et le maintien de ces conditions. Elles demandent aussi à la Grèce de donner des garanties satisfaisantes pour la protection des minorités musulmanes dans les îles qu'elle acquiert en vertu de la décision des six Puissances mentionnée ci-dessus.

L'attribution définitive à la Grèce des îles que les six Puissances ont décidé de laisser en sa possession ne deviendra effective que lorsque les troupes grecques auront évacué les territoires assignés à l'Albanie en vertu du protocole de Florence du 17 Décembre 1913⁽⁶⁾ ci-annexé de même que l'île de Saseno, et lorsque le Gouvernement Grec se sera formellement engagé à n'opposer aucune résistance et à ne soutenir ni encourager directement ou indirectement aucune résistance d'aucun genre à l'état des choses établi par les six Puissances dans l'Albanie du Sud.

L'évacuation commencera le 1^{er} Mars n.s. par le retrait des troupes grecques du Caza de Koritsa et de l'île de Saseno, et procédera successivement jusqu'au 31 Mars n.s. date à laquelle elle devra prendre fin par le départ des troupes helléniques du Caza de Delvino."

Les six Puissances ont la confiance que les décisions ci-dessus seront loyalement respectées par le Gouvernement Grec.

Les soussignés saisissent, &c.

A. QUADT.
SZILASSY.
G. DEVILLE.
F. ELLIOT.
A. DE BOSDARI.
DEMIDOFF.

(5) [For the text of this treaty, v. *B.F.S.P.*, Vol. 107, pp 893 902. *cp. infra*, p. 281, No. 313.]

(6) [*cp. supra*, p. 82, No. 98, and *note* (1); p. 219, No. 233; p. 222, No. 237.]

No. 253.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 7977/98/14/44.

(No. 96.)

Sir,

Constantinople, D. February 16, 1914.

R. February 23, 1914.

With reference to my telegram No. 102 of the 14th instant,⁽¹⁾ I have the honour to enclose herein copies of the Collective Note addressed to the Imperial Ministry for Foreign Affairs (in accordance with the instructions contained in your telegram

(1) [Sir L. Mallet's telegram (No. 102) of February 14, 1914, D. 6.5 P.M., R. 9.30 P.M., stated that the declaration respecting the islands had been "signed by me and my colleagues and handed to the Grand Vizier." (F.O. 6801/98/14/44.) *cp. supra*, p. 198, No. 211, *encl.*; p. 219, No. 233.]

No. 84 [*sic*] of February 12⁽²⁾) relative to the decision of the Powers as to the fate of the Aegean Islands.

I also enclose copies of the reply returned to the Ambassadors of the Powers by the Grand Vizier, which reached me this morning.

I have, &c.

LOUIS MALLET.

Enclosure 1 in No. 253.

Collective Note to Sublime Porte.

Les soussignés, ambassadeurs d'Autriche-Hongrie, d'Italie et de Grande-Bretagne et chargés d'affaires de France, d'Allemagne et de Russie, ont l'honneur, d'ordre de leurs gouvernements, de porter à la connaissance du gouvernement impérial la communication suivante :

Par l'article 5 du traité de Londres du 17/30 mai 1913, entre la Turquie et les États alliés balkaniques, ainsi que par l'article 15 du traité signé à Athènes, entre la Turquie et la Grèce, le premier novembre 1913, la Porte s'est engagée à laisser aux six Puissances le soin de décider du sort des îles de la mer Égée.

En conséquence, les six Puissances ont soumis la question à une étude attentive et, après échange de vues, ont décidé que la Grèce restituerait à la Turquie les îles d'Imbros et de Ténédos et conserverait la possession des autres îles de la mer Égée qu'elle occupe actuellement. L'île de Castellorizo sera également rendue à la Turquie. Les six Puissances ont également décidé que des garanties satisfaisantes leur seraient données ainsi qu'à la Turquie par la Grèce que les îles dont elle gardera la possession ne seront ni fortifiées ni utilisées, pour un but naval ou militaire et qu'elle prendra des mesures effectives en vue de prévenir la contrebande entre les îles et le territoire ottoman. Les six Puissances se sont engagées à user de leur influence sur le gouvernement grec en vue d'assurer l'exécution loyale et le maintien de ces conditions. Les six Puissances exigeront en outre de la Grèce des garanties satisfaisantes pour la protection des minorités musulmanes dans les îles qu'elle acquiert.

Les six Puissances ont la confiance que les décisions ci-dessus seront loyalement respectées par le Gouvernement ottoman.

(Constantinople, le 14 février, 1914.

Enclosure 2 in No. 253.

Reply of Sublime Porte to Collective Note.

Le soussigné, Grand Vézir et Ministre des Affaires Étrangères de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan a l'honneur d'accuser réception de la note collective que LL.EE. les Ambassadeurs d'Autriche-Hongrie, d'Italie, de Grande-Bretagne et MM. les Chargés d'Affaires de France, d'Allemagne et de Russie lui ont remise le 14 courant.

Le Gouvernement Impérial en laissant aux Grandes Puissances, le soin de fixer le sort des îles occupées par la Grèce, leur avait, en même temps et à différentes reprises, exposé les considérations d'ordre supérieur qui rendaient indispensable pour lui la possession des îles se trouvant dans le voisinage des détroits ainsi que celles qui font partie intégrante des possessions asiatiques de l'Empire.

Le Gouvernement Impérial avait donc le ferme espoir que les Grandes Puissances voudraient bien user de leur mandat pour donner à la question des îles une solution conforme aux intérêts bien compris des parties en cause.

C'est avec un vif regret qu'il constate que les six Grandes Puissances n'ont pas tenu suffisamment compte des exigences vitales de l'Empire et réglé cette question de façon à écarter toute contestation sérieuse.

(2) [The reference should probably be to telegram (No. 87) of February 12, *v. supra*, p. 231, No. 250.]

Tout en prenant acte de la décision des six Grandes Puissances concernant la restitution à l'Empire des îles d'Imbros, de Ténédos et de Castellorizo, le Gouvernement Impérial, conscient de ses devoirs, et appréciant à sa haute valeur les bienfaits de la paix, s'efforcera à faire valoir ses justes et légitimes revendications.

Constantinople, le 14 février, 1914.

No. 254.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.

Private.⁽¹⁾

Dear Sir Edward,

Constantinople, February 18, 1914.

I have written to Nicolson at some length⁽²⁾ about the prospect of the Turks embarking upon an adventure in Western Thrace. Nothing could be more satisfactory than the assurance given to me by Talaat Bey on this subject, which I had a good opportunity of raising with him in a friendly and informal way when he lunched with me yesterday. I cannot commit myself as to what may happen in the future but for the present at any rate there is a strong tendency in the direction of peace and reform. I am inclined to think that they would accept some arrangement about the islands which would save their dignity. If you had a chance later on of giving moderating advice at Athens and saw your way to this it would be appreciated very much here. Talaat evidently hopes for help from Monsieur Bratiano whom he tells me in confidence he is going to visit at Bucharest. . . .⁽³⁾

The present Ministers are the best we can have and I believe that they are really intent on reforms and reorganisation and that we ought to encourage them when they do well. They are like children and very appreciative of sympathy. There has been much misunderstanding as to the attitude of His Majesty's Government about the islands but I have done my best with the Ministers to eradicate any notion of hostility on your part and I think with success. They are most friendly in communications to me.

Any help which you could give them would be enormously valued and the islands soon forgotten. I am unable quite to understand Germany's position here. It is in my belief largely due to clever handling and flattery on the part of German agents but if the Russian[s] would change their tactics and treat the Turks as Monsieur Goulkewitch, the Russian Chargé d'Affaires treats them, with sympathy, they would soon acquire as much influence as Germany and our position would be much easier. If the Triple Entente would act together here we could do a great deal—not necessarily hostile to Germany—but Bompard dislikes talking politics and it is quite impossible to discuss anything with him.

I get on with Giers very well and on the whole like him as much as anyone here, but he is not the kind of man for this place, as he is so very much of a bureaucrat and rather a bully.

Yours sincerely,

LOUIS MALLET.

⁽¹⁾ [Grey MSS., Vol. 41.]

⁽²⁾ [Sir L. Mallet's letter of February 10, 1914, is not reproduced, as it does not add materially to information given elsewhere. The following passages are, however, of some interest: "The question [of the islands] is a most difficult one and I see no light at present. If an arrangement could be arrived at between Turkey and Greece the likelihood of Turkey joining Bulgaria in some land adventure against Greece at a later date would be diminished and might disappear and I think we could get those people to settle down and turn their thoughts to administration. . . . The Turks are now far more moderate in their language. I do not think there is any fear of a coup de main and Talaat assures me categorically that war is not thought of and tells me that Enver wants a long time to reorganise the army." Carnock MSS., Vol. I of 1914.]

⁽³⁾ [The omitted paragraphs refer to the Anglo-Ottoman Association and some personal matters.]

Sir F. Elliot to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 8871/98, 14/44.

(No. 45.)

Sir,

Athens, D. February 21, 1914.

R. February 28, 1914.

With reference to my despatch No. 38 of the 13th instant,⁽¹⁾ I have the honour to transmit herewith copies of the reply of the Greek Government to the collective Note of that date. The reply was delivered to the six Legations this afternoon, and was simultaneously communicated to the Press.

I have, &c.

F. ELLIOT.

Enclosure in No. 255.

Extract from the "Écho d'Athènes" of February 9 (22), 1914.

LA RÉPONSE DE LA GRÈCE AUX PUISSANCES.

Le soussigné, Ministre des affaires étrangères de Grèce, a eu l'honneur de recevoir la déclaration que LL.EE. Messieurs les ministres d'Allemagne, d'Autriche-Hongrie, de France, de Grande-Bretagne, d'Italie et de Russie ont bien voulu lui faire de la part de leurs gouvernements et prie Votre Excellence d'en agréer ses remerciements empressés.

Conscient des engagements que la Grèce a assumés par les traités de Londres et d'Athènes, ainsi que de la connexité établie entre la question des frontières méridionales de l'Albanie et celles des îles de la mer Égée, le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté hellénique apprécie à leur juste valeur les résolutions d'ordre européen, auxquelles les puissances ont abouti dans la question des îles occupées par la Grèce et dans celle de la délimitation Gréco-Albanaise.

Le Gouvernement royal, tout en exprimant sa reconnaissance de la solution équitable, conforme d'ailleurs aux intérêts bien compris des deux pays, que les puissances ont donnée à la question des îles qu'il occupe, prend acte de l'attribution de ces îles au Royaume hellénique à l'exception d'Imbros et Ténédos, ainsi que de Castellorizo, lesquelles devront être restituées à la Turquie. Le Gouvernement royal déclare qu'il est prêt à se conformer à la décision des Puissances, d'après laquelle des garanties satisfaisantes devront leur être données, ainsi qu'à la Turquie, que ces îles ne seront ni fortifiées, ni utilisées pour aucun but naval ou militaire.

Comme contre-partie naturelle de ces obligations qui lui sont imposées, le Gouvernement royal ne doute point que les Puissances voudront décider, en réalisation du régime établi, que ces mêmes îles ne pourront jamais être l'objet d'une attaque ou d'une opération hostile quelconque, navale ou militaire, et que des mesures d'un caractère agressif ne seront pas prises le long de la côte de l'Asie-Mineure faisant face à ces îles.

Le Gouvernement royal est prêt à donner à la Turquie les garanties ci-dessus, formulées dans la déclaration qui lui a été faite par les Puissances aussitôt que la Turquie déclarera qu'elle se conformera aux communications des Puissances.

Enfin le Gouvernement royal ne manquera pas de prendre des mesures effectives en vue de prévenir la contrebande entre les îles et le continent ottoman et donnera toutes les garanties satisfaisantes, prévues d'ailleurs déjà par la constitution du royaume et par le traité d'Athènes, pour la protection des minorités musulmanes dans les îles attribuées à la Grèce par la décision des Puissances. En se faisant un devoir d'accepter sur ce point encore les décisions des puissances, le Gouvernement

(1) [*v. supra*, pp. 231-2, No. 252, and *encl.*]

royal a le droit d'espérer que lors de la restitution à la Turquie d'Imbros, de Ténédos et de Castellorizo, les puissances voudront bien demander au gouvernement impérial ottoman des garanties efficaces afin que leurs populations grecques, se trouvant dans la pénible nécessité de renoncer à leur condition actuelle, conservent les libertés ecclésiastiques, scolaires et autres dont elles ont toujours joui. Il est nécessaire de noter que Castellorizo fait partie du Dodécanèse et a toujours participé à un régime privilégié; en conséquence, il est en droit d'espérer qu'il bénéficiera du régime que les Puissances, en temps voulu, voudront bien assurer à ces îles lorsqu'elles décideront de leur sort.

Il va sans dire aussi que parmi les dispositions du traité d'Athènes qui, automatiquement, auront leur application sur les îles que la Grèce acquiert, l'amnistie convenue entre la Grèce et la Turquie par l'article 3 dudit traité de paix sera également appliquée dans toute sa plénitude aux trois îles précitées, dont les habitants ou les originaires ne pourront en aucune manière être molestés en raison d'aucuns actes ayant une relation quelconque avec la guerre ou de sentiments qu'ils aient pu manifester en faveur de l'union au Royaume hellénique.

La Grèce ne saurait dissimuler la douleur qu'elle ressent de devoir abandonner ces trois îles, qui auraient les mêmes droits que les autres pour aspirer à l'union avec la mère-patrie.

Le Gouvernement royal a pris connaissance du Protocole de Florence du 17 décembre 1913, constituant les limites méridionales de l'État albanais,⁽²⁾ ainsi que du désir des puissances que l'île de Saseno soit incorporée à l'Albanie. Quelle que soit la douleur qu'elle ressent de devoir se séparer de régions, de culture et de conscience nationale grecques depuis des milliers d'années, et de populations grecques, qui, après tant de siècles, viennent de saluer avec un sentiment de patriotisme incoercible leur rétablissement national, la Grèce, se conformant aux décisions des puissances, donnera l'ordre à ses troupes d'évacuer dans le délai fixé les territoires assignés à l'Albanie. Le Gouvernement royal prend dès à présent l'engagement formel à n'opposer aucune résistance et à ne soutenir ni encourager directement ou indirectement aucune résistance d'aucun genre à l'état de choses établi par les six Puissances dans l'Albanie du Sud. L'île de Saseno ne pouvant être cédée d'après la Constitution du Royaume qu'en vertu d'une loi, le Gouvernement royal promet d'introduire incessamment devant la Chambre le projet de loi y relatif.

Toutefois, le Gouvernement royal a l'honneur d'attirer l'attention des six puissances sur l'opportunité qu'il y aurait, pour des considérations stratégiques, ethnologiques et économiques, que certains villages de la vallée d'Argyrocastro, conformément à l'annexe A,⁽³⁾ fussent incorporés dans la Grèce. En échange, le Gouvernement royal est disposé, d'un côté à consentir à une rectification des frontières, indiquée d'ailleurs par la configuration géographique, qui prolongerait la côte albanaise jusqu'au cap de Paganja, et de l'autre à remettre à l'Albanie la somme de 2,500,000 francs. En outre, le Gouvernement royal se considère en droit de demander aux puissances que des garanties suffisantes et efficaces soient données aux populations grecques revenant à l'Albanie, pour leur langue, leur organisation ecclésiastique séculaire, leur religion, leurs églises et leurs écoles, et le fonctionnement des legs et des fondations scolaires et de bienfaisance épirotes. Spécialement en ce qui concerne la région de Chimara, elle a de tout temps joui d'une très large autonomie, dont les Puissances voudront certainement tenir compte au moment où elles décideront de l'organisation administrative de l'Albanie.

Il contribuerait essentiellement à tranquilliser les populations qui, dans les moments critiques qu'elles traversent, se trouvent encore, vu l'état actuel de l'Albanie, sous le coup des plus graves appréhensions, si le Gouvernement royal était mis en mesure de leur donner au nom de l'Europe des assurances au sujet de ces droits et si en même temps des mesures efficaces étaient prises pour la protection et le maintien

⁽²⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 82, No. 98, and note (1); p. 219, No. 233; p. 222, No. 237.]

⁽³⁾ [Not reproduced.]

de ces libertés indispensables au bien-être même de l'Albanie et aux bonnes relations si hautement désirables des deux éléments.

Conformément aux décisions de la Conférence des Ambassadeurs à Londres, le Gouvernement royal entend que le canal de Corfu sera soumis à des conditions d'une neutralité spéciale et effective.

Quant à l'évacuation des territoires occupés par les troupes helléniques, le Gouvernement royal considère qu'il est dans l'intérêt général que l'ordre et la tranquillité soient assurés au moment du départ de ses troupes, et que des mesures soient prises, pouvant rassurer les populations des contrées qui seront évacuées, que leur vie et leurs propriétés ne courent aucun danger. Dans cet ordre d'idées, il serait à souhaiter que l'autorité, dans cette partie de l'Épire qui formera partie intégrante de l'Albanie, fût remise à une force régulière constituée et propre à imposer le respect et la confiance. Le Gouvernement royal, fort de sa sincérité, croit pouvoir compter sur la confiance co-opération des Puissances pour leur demander de bien vouloir concerter avec lui toute mesure pouvant prévenir l'effusion de sang et l'accomplissement d'actes arbitraires, qui compromettraient l'œuvre de pacification que l'Europe se propose dans ces contrées, et la possibilité d'une cohabitation des deux éléments en présence. Une évacuation successive et graduelle de chaque caza après que la force armée qui y assurera l'ordre y sera établie sous la direction des officiers hollandais, paraît un moyen efficace pour garantir la plus prompte et la plus sûre réalisation des conditions posées par les Puissances. Et si les puissances n'hésitaient pas, dans un sentiment de justice et d'équité, à incorporer à cette force armée des éléments locaux grecs pris parmi ceux qui ayant servi dans l'armée pendant l'occupation militaire hellénique, se sont habitués à l'ordre et à la discipline, ce procédé, tout en renforçant la gendarmerie albanaise d'éléments dignes de considération, aurait l'influence la plus salutaire et donnerait la confiance à ces populations qui, à juste titre, aspirent au droit de co-opérer au maintien de l'ordre et à la protection de leurs foyers.

Enfin le Gouvernement royal croit de son devoir de faire remarquer que les limites du caza de Corytza formant, sans être spécifiées, le point de départ des décisions prises par la Commission internationale à Florence, il y a lieu à se demander si ces frontières administratives, qui d'ailleurs ont souvent subi des modifications, correspondent aux exigences légitimes réciproques pour constituer la frontière entre deux États. Le Gouvernement royal prie les puissances de vouloir bien faire examiner sur place, par la commission de délimitation, les frontières du Caza au dit point de vue et d'y faire apporter toute modification propre à assurer de ce côté encore, les bonnes relations entre les deux États. Jusqu'à ce que cette délimitation soit tracée, il sera indiqué que les troupes grecques tout en commençant, selon la décision des Puissances, l'évacuation par le caza de Corytza, s'arrêtent aux frontières naturelles, répondant le mieux aux limites du caza, d'après la ligne tracée à l'annexe B.⁽⁴⁾

Le Gouvernement royal prend l'engagement formel, bien entendu, de faire retirer ses troupes de tout point occupé qui ne parviendrait pas définitivement à la Grèce à la suite de la délimitation ci-dessus proposée.

Le Gouvernement royal est confiant en l'esprit de justice et d'équité avec lequel les Puissances voudront encore examiner les considérations qu'il a cru devoir leur présenter.

Le soussigné saisit, &c.

G. STREIT.

Athènes, le 8 (21) février, 1914.

(4) [Not reproduced.]

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 11559/98/14/41.

(No. 9.) Confidential.

Sir,

Bucharest, D. March 4, 1914.

R. March 16, 1914.

The Prime Minister told me in course of conversation the evening before last that at the pressing request of the Turkish Government he had a few days ago sounded M. Venizelos as to abandoning to Turkey the Islands of Mitylene and Chios. M. Venizelos had replied that he could not give them up. They were inhabited by Greeks and had been assigned by the Powers to Greece in connexion with their decision as to the Southern frontier of Albania, in which decision Greece had acquiesced. M. Venizelos said, however, that he was willing to give such guarantees as would prevent the Islands becoming a menace to Turkey, or being used for contraband trade. On being informed of the result of the Roumanian Government's intervention at Athens, the Turkish Government announced their intention of negotiating later with Greece regarding these Islands, an announcement which the Roumanian Government regard as indicating that Turkey's intentions for the moment, at least, are pacific.

I have, &c.

G. BARCLAY.

(¹) [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

[*ED. NOTE.*—For the communication made at Athens on March 8 by the representatives of the Triple Alliance, *cp. supra*, pp. 108–11, Nos. 123–4, and *notes*.]

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Private.⁽²⁾

Dear Sir Edward,

Pera, March 10, 1914.

The situation has improved here in the last few weeks and I have hopes for the future provided the finances can be put straight.

Even with the most rigid economy Graves⁽³⁾ tells me that there must be a deficit of between four and five million pounds on the next budget which will have to be met out of the loan. This cannot go on year after year and it is doubtful whether equilibrium can be established except by a still further reduction of the war budget which has been reduced by Enver Pasha from nine to six millions already. It is, I think, capable of still further reduction and if we could acquire real influence here we should try and use it in this direction but it is a delicate matter and other Powers may not see eye to eye with us.

The question is, however, a vital one and unless the situation is faced or unless salvation comes from some unforeseen quarter the alternative lies between a further reduction of the Army Budget or bankruptcy in a very few years. The Turks say that they must have a large army otherwise they will be at the mercy of the Balkan Powers or of Russia. But my answer to that is that a smaller army will be amply large to protect them from the Balkan States and then if Russia means to fight them, their present army is not large enough and that it is better to take the small risk

(¹) [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Sir A. Nicolson; to Sir E. Crowe.]

(²) [Grey MSS., Vol. 41.]

(³) [Mr. R. W. Graves was seconded for service under the Turkish Government in September 1909. He had been British Delegate on the International Financial Commission in Macedonia since 1907.]

involved in reduction than to go to certain ruin financially in a few years' time. But it would be hard work to persuade them of this and although I am on very good terms with the Ministers, I have not, as British Representative, much official influence. The Ministers are inexperienced and very like schoolboys who are often much the better for a little sympathy and commendation than for perpetual criticism. I think that it is possible to a certain extent to guide them in the right path, though this would seem heretical to some people. The difficulty is that there are others who give them bad advice, notably, I fear, the Austrians. As to the islands the Greeks have an easy answer to any proposals for an exchange, as I told Panas, for they have only to say that the Dodecanese is still in the hands of Italy. I admit however that this is a makeshift reply and the case must be met. The Turks are serious in wanting to negotiate when the moment comes, and I cannot disguise from myself that there will be trouble if the Greeks refuse their overtures. I learn in confidence from Goulkewitch⁽¹⁾ that the Grand Vizier has already appealed privately to Russia for assistance, but that Sazonow, to Goulkewitch's regret, answered that the question had been decided by the Powers.

Monsieur de Giers, who is now back, told me confidentially that he himself is in favour of paving the way for direct negotiation but that he cannot press this on Monsieur Sazonow.

The French Chargé d'Affaires holds the same view, which he has urged on his Government without success. Both fear that the Triple Alliance will step in and arrange things. This is not impossible but Wangenheim told me and has since told others that the islands question must be decided by a "petite guerre navale" which will be localised as, in any circumstance which can be foreseen, there is no danger of Turkey fighting on land.

This may be true and I myself am inclined to believe that Enver will not risk his army for some years. It is a pity to run any chances all the same and I confess that I should be more than relieved if a direct negotiation could end in a peaceful solution. A naval war would not be so pleasant a situation for us, as for Germany, as we would have naval missions with both belligerents.⁽²⁾

Would it be possible for you to let Sazonow know that you would not be against a direct negotiation and would be quite ready to help?⁽³⁾

Yours sincerely,
LOUIS MALLET.

⁽¹⁾ [M. Gulkevich was Acting-Councillor of the Russian Embassy at Constantinople.]

⁽²⁾ [For the appointment of British naval officers to re-organize the Turkish navy, v. *Goach & Temperley*, Vol. IX (1), p. 282, *Ed. note*.]

⁽³⁾ [The rest of the letter refers to Italian Railway Concessions, to Anglo-Italian co-operation in the Mediterranean, and to financial affairs.]

No. 258.

Sir F. Elliot to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Private & Confidential.⁽²⁾

Dear Sir Edward Grey,

Athens, March 10, 1914.

M. Venizelos has not alluded to his conversation with you, which you were so good as to record in your private letter to me of the 21st of January,⁽³⁾ on the subject of the possibility of an "entente" between England and Greece to preserve the *status quo* in the Mediterranean; it was indeed not to be expected that he should. But my Russian colleague tells me in strict confidence that he, Demidoff, has written privately to M. Sazonoff suggesting that England, France and Russia should guarantee to Greece the possession of the Aegean Islands, and should in return obtain from

⁽¹⁾ [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Prime Minister.]

⁽²⁾ [Grey MSS., Vol. 24.]

⁽³⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 194-5, No. 207.]

Greece the assurance of her support against the members of the Triple Alliance. He argues firstly, that it is high time for the Triple Entente to assert itself without waiting on the pleasure of the Triple Alliance; secondly, that even if the Greek fleet be not yet an important factor, it would be very inconvenient to have Greek ports and anchorages closed against us in the event of war; thirdly, that now is the time to make a compact with Greece, while she is still governed by M. Venizelos, whose natural inclination is in our direction: if we wait until the swing of the pendulum brings M. Theotoky back into power, we shall find the tendency the other way. This is undoubtedly true, and I reported officially in that sense some time ago. According to Demidoff's information the Austrians are working hard even now to increase their influence and their trade in this country.

There is at present no reason to anticipate a diminution of M. Venizelos' authority in Parliament or the country, but he might break down from over-work. He told me yesterday that he is longing for rest. If he could, he would give up the Ministry of War, and create a sinecure Ministry for himself, but he finds no one able to replace him at the War Office, which is a difficult post just now owing to constant friction between the French Mission and the Greek General Staff.

Yours sincerely,
F. ELLIOT.

No. 259.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen.

F.O. 11437/10259/14/53.

(No. 60.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 12, 1914.

I gave the German Ambassador to-day a record of my conversation of yesterday with the Greek Minister.⁽¹⁾ I pointed out that, in effect, the Greek Government asked two questions:—

(1) As they understood that the communication that they had just received represented the answer of two Powers only,⁽²⁾ were they to expect an answer on behalf of all the Powers to the communication that the Greek Government had made to them all? (2) As the communication just received represented the answer of two Powers only, and also dealt with some only of the points that the Greek Government had raised, and left entirely unanswered some other points, such as that about the *Ægean Islands*, were they to expect an answer from all the Powers⁽³⁾ dealing with the whole of the points?

I said that I should like to know the view of the German Government. At present, I did not intend to make any reply to the Greek Government, unless I could make it in agreement with all the Powers. The communication made in Athens on behalf of Austria and Italy had not been communicated officially to the French Government or the Russian Government or to me, though Count Mensdorff had read to me a translation of its purport.⁽⁴⁾

I pointed out, in the course of conversation, that the explanation of what had taken place in Athens given to me by the Italian Ambassador was the same as that which Prince Lichnowsky had given me.⁽⁵⁾ Count Berchtold, on the other hand, did not

(1) [A telegram (No. 43) was sent to Sir F. Elliot describing this conversation, D March 11, 9 P.M. It is not reproduced, as the tenour is sufficiently indicated above (F.O. 11054/10259/14/53). It was repeated, for information only, to all the Embassies. *cp. G.P., XXXVI (II), p. 530; Imperialismus*, 1st Ser., Vol. II, p. 3, No. 4.]

(2) [*cp. supra*, pp. 108–10, Nos. 123–4.]

(3) [*v. infra*, pp. 248–9, No. 268.]

(4) [*cp. supra*, p. 110, No. 124.]

(5) [*cp. supra*, pp. 110–1, No. 124, note (4).]

give this explanation; and I gathered that the communication in Athens had, so far as the Austrian Government were concerned, been intentional. This was confirmed by something that Count Forgach had said to Sir Maurice de Bunsen.

[I am, &c.]
E. G[REY].

No. 260.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 11972/10259/14/53.

(No. 151.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 13, 1914.

The French and Russian Ambassadors came to see me to-day.⁽²⁾

I told them of the explanation, about the communication made in Athens by the Triple Alliance, which the Italian Ambassador had given me⁽³⁾ since I last saw them, and also of the explanation that Count Mensdorff had given me this afternoon.⁽³⁾ I said that I had asked Count Mensdorff to thank Count Berchtold for this full explanation. I had made the comment that, from what the Italian Ambassador had told me, it appeared that the Italian Government had intended their Minister to join only in drawing up a communication, and not in making one. I had then told Count Mensdorff of my conversation with M. Gennadius, as recorded in my telegram number: 43 to Sir Francis Elliot,⁽⁴⁾ and had asked him what Count Berchtold's view was as to making a complete reply to Greece on behalf of all the Powers.

I gave the French and Russian Ambassadors copies of the record of my conversation with the Greek Minister, and told them that I had also asked the German Ambassador to find out for me what the view of the German Government was on this communication from the Greeks.

The French Ambassador then informed me that M. Sazonof, when he received the German explanation of what had taken place in Athens had observed that the communication made by the Austrian Minister in Athens entirely ignored the connection of the question of the Ægean Islands with the question of the southern frontier of Albania. M. Sazonof thought that England, France, and Russia ought to formulate a reply to Greece, and submit it to the other Powers. The French Ambassador asked me my view.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet. It was repeated to St. Petersburg (No. 105).]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. Imperialismus*, 1st Ser., Vol. II, pp. 4-5, No. 5, where the date of the conversation is given as March 11. A previous conversation had taken place on March 11, as recorded in Sir Edward Grey's despatch (No. 146) of that date to Sir F. Bertie. The despatch was repeated to Sir G. Buchanan (No. 100). (F.O. 11389/10259/14/53.) The record is omitted from considerations of space. The following extract is, however, of some interest:—

" . . . I told M. Cambon and Count Benckendorff that, when I had first received the news of the separate action by Austria and Italy in Athens, my impulse had been to consult the Prime Minister and the Cabinet as to withdrawing the British Representative from the International Commission in Albania and the British detachment from Scutari, on the ground that the Powers had ceased to act together about Albania. But I had felt that this would create considerable sensation, and I did not wish to do it without consulting France and Russia. I observed that if, as M. Doumergue and M. Sazonof supposed, what had happened in Athens was not a mistake, but was deliberate, it would not be an isolated incident, but would be followed by others. If this proved to be the case, my own feeling would be in favour of a course such as I had proposed.

The Russian Ambassador deprecated such a course, on the ground that it would look like a retreat before the Triple Alliance.

The French Ambassador suggested that I might put the idea in a milder form. If I spoke to the German Ambassador about it, I might say that, should Austria and Italy decline to communicate to the other Powers what had been said in Athens, it would imply the break-up of the Concert of Europe."

cp. Imperialismus, 1st Ser., Vol. I, pp. 421-3, No. 422.]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp. 110-1, No. 124, note ⁽¹⁾.]

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. immediately preceding document, and note ⁽¹⁾.*]

I said that my view was that it should be left to the other Powers to propose a reply.

The French Ambassador seemed to agree at once with this opinion of mine.

But, as the discussion continued, I gave my reasons for it: I pointed out that the important thing in any formal reply to Greece now on behalf of all the Powers must be the question of the Islands. Greece, in effect, asked for a guarantee. In any reply that we formulated, we must either propose a guarantee or not. If we did not propose a guarantee, we should not really be answering the Greeks at all. If we did propose a guarantee and the Triple Alliance agreed, it would of course be well and good. But if the Triple Alliance did not agree, and I thought that probably they would not, we should then have incurred all the odium and discredit in Turkey of having proposed a guarantee in favour of Greece. The other Powers, who had refused this proposal, would benefit in Turkey; and France, Russia and England would then have to decide the question of whether they themselves would guarantee the Islands to Greece. Personally, I was opposed to a guarantee unless all the Powers joined in it. At present, our hands were free with regard to the Islands, and we could take whatever line we chose in any crisis that arose. If we gave a guarantee, our hands would no longer be free, and the Powers who had kept their hands free would have the advantage of freedom, possibly at our expense. Yet, if we proposed a guarantee, and were not prepared to give it ourselves when other Powers refused, we should disappoint Greece. We should thus have incurred odium and discredit in Turkey by making the proposal, and have disappointed Greece by not being prepared to make it effective.

The two Ambassadors both concurred in this opinion.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

No. 261.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 12337/10259/14/53.

(No. 64.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 16, 1914.

The German Ambassador gave me this afternoon the document of wh[ic]h a copy is enclosed herein, as representing the view of the German Government as to the reply that should be made to Greece about the question of the Ægean Islands.

The Ambassador told me that his Government observed that the Powers had undertaken to come to a decision about the Islands, but not to execute it.

He also said that he believed that what the Austrian and Italian Governments had said in Athens about the southern Albanian frontier had now been communicated to me officially.⁽²⁾

I gathered from what he said that the German Government were of opinion that, on this subject, the Powers might adopt the communication already made by Austria and Italy. I said that the Austrian Ambassador had told me verbally the contents of the communication, but I did not think that we had been given anything in writing.

The German Ambassador said that he understood that the Austrian Ambassador had communicated it officially on the 10th instant.⁽²⁾

I replied that I did not remember his having done that, though he had given a very emphatic explanation of the mistake made by the Italian Minister in Athens.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp. 108-11, Nos. 123-4, and *notes*.]

Enclosure in No. 261.

Note communicated by Prince Lichnowsky.

The islands which were adjudicated to Greece are to become Greek property automatically after the fulfilment of the conditions laid down with regard to Albania. If, in addition to that, Greece desires Turkey to abandon for ever any warlike measures against the islands or to promise the final acceptance of the decision of the Powers, it rests with her to obtain those concessions directly from Constantinople. The same applies to the guarantees which Greece requests with regard to the Greek population on the Turkish islands.

In the same way as the Powers engaged themselves in the note of February 13th⁽³⁾ to work in Athens for the fulfilment of the conditions stipulated for the Greek islands, they will also, if necessary, work in Pera by friendly advices for the observance of their decisions.

(³) [*v. supra*, pp. 231-2, No. 252, and *encl.*]

No. 262.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir L. Mallet.*Private.⁽¹⁾

My dear Mallet,

London, March 18, 1914.

I recognise the importance of financial help for Turkey, but I cannot influence financiers here to invest money in Turkey. The experiment with Cassel was both embarrassing and unsuccessful.⁽²⁾

On the other hand, I have resisted Sazonof's proposal that we should formulate a reply to Greece about the Ægean Islands: in other words, that we should propose to the other Powers to give Greece the guarantee for which she asks.⁽³⁾ I have resisted the proposal on the ground that the Triple Alliance would refuse to agree to it; that we ought not to give a guarantee unless all the Powers do so; and that to propose it ineffectually would be to incur odium and discredit in Turkey without any compensating advantage to Greece or ourselves.

I do not think that I can honestly instigate direct negotiations between Turkey and Greece, to get Mitylene and Chios for Greece. It would, in effect, be to put pressure on Greece to give way; and I cannot do this. . . .⁽⁴⁾

Yours sincerely,
E. GREY.

(¹) [Grey MSS., Vol. 41.]

(²) [*cp. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. VI, pp. 380-433, Chapter XLVI (II), *passim*.]

(³) [*v. supra*, pp. 241-2, No. 260.]

(⁴) [The rest of the letter is omitted as it adds nothing of importance to information given elsewhere.]

No. 263.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir R. Rodd.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 14468/10259/14/53.

(No. 84.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 30, 1914.

The Italian Ambassador informed me to-day that the Marquis di San Giuliano was endeavouring to get the consent of the Austrian Government to make the reply to

(¹) [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

Greece about the Ægean Islands more favourable, by indicating to Greece that, as the Powers were not prepared to give a guarantee of the Islands allocated to Greece, they would relieve her from the obligation not to fortify them. The Marquis di San Giuliano would like to know what I thought of the idea. The Ambassador expressed a strong opinion that Greece was entitled to have a more favourable reply than she had yet received.

I told him what had passed between M. Gennadius and myself⁽²⁾ as to the difficulty of getting the Powers to agree to any more favourable reply. Greece wished to have something more explicit than had already been said to her about the southern frontier of Albania. M. Cambon had suggested to me that a reply might be drafted, which, without going in substance beyond what Italy and Austria had said about the southern Albanian frontier, and what Germany and Austria had expressed themselves willing to say about the Islands, might yet be more full and cordial in tone than the communication already made to Greece by Italy and Austria.⁽³⁾ I was prepared to consider such a draft, in the hope that a reply of this sort might be useful to M. Venizelos; but I would not propose any thing like guarantees, to which I knew that some of the Powers would object. As regards relieving Greece from the obligation not to fortify the Islands, I thought that it might perhaps precipitate action on the part of Turkey, who might wish to act before Greece had had time to fortify the Islands. It would also look as if the Powers entirely disinterested themselves in the fate of the Islands. Though I was not urging that the Powers should give guarantees, I thought that they should keep a free hand, and not ostentatiously disinterest themselves in the future of the Islands.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 240-1, No. 259, and note ⁽¹⁾.]

⁽³⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 108-10, Nos. 123-4.]

No. 264.

Sir F. Elliot to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 15688/19439/14/19.

(No. 86.) Confidential.

Sir,

Athens, D. April 3, 1914.

R. April 9, 1914.

With reference to Sir Louis Mallet's telegrams Nos. 210 of the 1st⁽²⁾ and 212 of the 2nd instant,⁽³⁾ and to my telegram No. 69 of yesterday's date,⁽⁴⁾ I have the honour to report that Monsieur Streit informed me this morning that the Roumanian Minister had just been telling him that General Coanda had no mission whatever. When I saw His Excellency yesterday he had heard no more of the questions of a direct understanding with Turkey on the question of the islands, since the reply returned by the Greek Government to the overtures made by the Turkish through the

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

⁽²⁾ [Sir L. Mallet's telegram (No. 210) of April 2, 1914, D. 1.30 A.M., R. 10.30 A.M., stated that General Coanda, Chief of the Roumanian Staff, had arrived in Constantinople, and that his mission was to promote a direct understanding between Greece and Turkey on the question of the Islands. General Coanda denied that his mission had any political character. (F.O. 14494/13439/14/19.)]

⁽³⁾ [Sir L. Mallet's telegram (No. 212) of April 2, 1914, stated that the Turkish point of view with regard to the islands had been put before General Coanda, and that informal conversations were taking place. (F.O. 14634/13439/14/19.)]

⁽⁴⁾ [Sir F. Elliot's telegram (No. 69) of April 2, 1914, D. 1.45 P.M., R. 2.50 P.M., stated that General Coanda was proceeding to Egypt to see the Prime Minister. It also stated that the "Greek Government do not believe he has a mission." (F.O. 14641/13439/14/19.)]

Roumanian Government as reported in my telegram No. 64 of the 26th March.⁽⁵⁾ He had, however, afterwards seen Ghalib Bey the Turkish Minister, and although the latter professed to have no instructions, Monsieur Streit derived from the conversation the impression that there was a glimmering of hope that an understanding might be arrived at on the basis outlined by the Greek Government. A suggestion made by Monsieur Venizelos that the Turkish representatives in the islands might be entitled "Commissioners" instead of "Consuls" seemed to be favourably received. It would cause an outcry in Greece, but it was worth while to face that, if a concession on what was a mere point of form helped to bring about an arrangement.

I can see no disposition here to retrocede Chios and Mitylene to Turkey on any conditions whatever, and I am continually assured that the question has not been raised. The loss of Mitylene would be a serious one from the financial point of view, but it is my opinion that the exchange of that island for the Dodecanese and perhaps Imbros would be an advantage overbalancing the loss, if it led to the re-establishment of friendly relations with Turkey. The cession of Chios I regard as impossible, owing to the memories of the massacre of 1822, and to the large number of rich and influential families—to mention only the great house of Ralli—who come from that island. But if such exchange should be desired, it is imperatively necessary to hasten the restoration of the Dodecanese by Italy to Turkey, for at the present moment Turkey has nothing to bargain with but a more or less problematical reversion.

I have, &c.

F. ELLIOT.

MINUTE.

This does not bear out what Tewfik P[ash]a said yesterday to me as to M. Venizelos having proposed an exchange.⁽⁶⁾

A. N.

E. G.

[April 15.]

(⁵) [Sir F. Elliot's telegram (No. 64) of March 26, 1914, D. 1.30 P.M., R. 4 P.M., stated that the Turkish Government had approached the Greek Government through Rumania with a proposal to discuss the Islands question "on an entirely new basis." The Greek Government were prepared to enter into such negotiations provided that "decisions of the Powers be regarded as starting point." (F.O. 13439/13439/14/19.)]

(⁶) [v. *infra*, p. 247, No 267.]

No. 265.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 17608/10259/14/44.

Tel. (No. 189.)

Foreign Office, April 21, 1914, 6.15 P.M.

Russian Ch[argé] d'Aff[aire]s has just communicated a telegram from M. Sazonow to the effect that he is unable to accept the two amendments made in the reply of the Powers to the Greek note eliminating reference to Castellorizo and inserting "influence amicale."⁽²⁾ Please inform M[inister] for F[oreign] A[ffairs] that all the Powers including France and ourselves have accepted the amendments, and that all R[ep]R[esentatives] at Athens are ready to hand in the reply, and urge H[is] E[xc]cellency to withdraw his objection and send the necessary instructions.

(¹) [This telegram was repeated to Paris (No. 116).]

(²) [*cp. infra*, pp. 248-9, No. 268, and notes.]

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.

St. Petersburg, April 22, 1914.

F.O. 17690/10259/14/44.

D. 8.40 P.M.

Tel. (No. 98.)

R. 10 P.M.

Your telegram No. 189 of April 21.⁽¹⁾

On my pressing the Minister for Foreign Affairs to withdraw his objections to the two amendments, his Excellency said that he had from the first taken exception to the French draft note as being too anodyne in character, and now it was to be still further toned down by introducing the word "amicale." This was being done at the instigation of the Ottoman Government, as the Turkish Minister here had himself suggested it to him. The news which he had received of the situation in Thrace was most serious, as the Turks seemed bent on expelling the Greek population, while the language held by the Ottoman Ambassador in Vienna, as well as reports which had reached him from other quarters, made it clear that the Turks would seize the two islands on the first possible opportunity. War with Greece would follow, and this might bring Bulgaria, Serbia, and eventually Austria into the field. The Powers were always going back on what they had originally said, and the consequence would be that they would one day be faced with a very serious situation.

His Excellency then complained of the fact that His Majesty's Government and the French Government had sent instructions to their representatives at Athens without waiting to know his views with regard to the two amendments. This was a fresh example of the lack of solidarity in the Triple *Entente*. The French no doubt wanted to be agreeable to Turkey on account of their financial interests, but we were making a great mistake, which we should live to regret, by not adopting a stronger attitude towards her. He did not know what Russia would have to do. She had her share of responsibility as a member of the concert, but if things went on as they were at present he might have to consider whether she had not better retire from the concert and resume her liberty of action.

I utterly failed to induce him to accept the word "amicale"; but he said that he was proposing a compromise which would omit that word as well as the word "toute." The sentence would then run, "User de son influence."

MINUTE.

M. Sazonow is evidently much annoyed, and there is a good deal to be said for his observations from his point of view. We had better say nothing more at present. M. de Etter will have communicated the remarks I made yesterday,⁽²⁾ and we can await the communication of his compromise.

A. N.

⁽¹⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

⁽²⁾ [Sir A. Nicolson told M. de Etter that the attitude of M. Sazonov was unfortunate and spoke in the terms of the immediately preceding telegram to Sir G. Buchanan. He "begged" M. de Etter to telegraph to M. Sazonov to say that we hoped he would not insist on his views." (F.O. 17603/10259/14/44.) v. *infra*, p. 249, No. 268, notes ⁽¹⁾ and ⁽⁵⁾.]

Sir Edward Grey to Sir L. Mallet.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 16881/10259/14/44.

(No. 234.) Confidential.

Sir,

Foreign Office, April 23, 1914.

The Turkish Ambassador called on Sir A. Nicolson on April 14th, and said that his Government had been informed that the Powers were about to address a note to the Greek Government concerning the Islands of the Ægean—in fact, the Turkish Government were cognizant of the text of the note. Tewfik Pasha stated that there was one passage in it which they would wish to see modified, and he gave Sir A. Nicolson the paper copy of which is enclosed herein, giving the original text in the proposed note—and the amendment desired by the Ottoman Government.

Sir A. Nicolson told Tewfik Pasha that a reply to the Greek note communicated to the Powers on February 21st⁽²⁾ was being discussed between them—but that the final form had not yet been agreed upon. He expressed surprise at the statement that the Ottoman Government were in possession of a text still under discussion and examination. The Greek note to which a reply was being considered dealt very largely with Albania and kindred questions, and the Greek Gov[ernmen]t were anxious to obtain a reply to this note. There was no intention of making any communication to the Porte.

Tewfik Pasha then said that he wished to tell Sir A. Nicolson very confidentially that M. Venizelos had sounded the Porte as to effecting an exchange of Scio and Mitylene for some islands in the Dodecanese. He hoped therefore that the reply of the Powers would not be of a nature to hamper any negotiations between Athens and Constantinople. Sir A. Nicolson observed that he did not see how the reply could affect such negotiations. H[is] M[ajesty's] Government had on more than one occasion said that they would raise no objection to a direct arrangement resp[ectin]g the islands.⁽³⁾

Tewfik Pasha remarked that he had at various times reported in that sense to his Government.

[I am, &c.

E. GREY.]

Enclosure in No. 267.

Extract from proposed Note for communication to the Greek Government by the Powers.

Original Text.

En ce qui concerne les Îles de la Mer Égée attribuées à la Grèce, le Gouvernement se déclare prêt comme ceux des autres Puissances à user de toute son influence auprès de la Sublime Porte pour que le Gouvernement Hellénique ne puisse pas être troublé dans la possession de ces Îles et que la décision collective de l'Europe touchant leur neutralisation soit respectée par le Gouvernement Ottoman."

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is based on Sir A. Nicolson's record of his conversation with Tewfik Pasha on April 14. Sir A. Nicolson added in his note that he did not believe that M. Venizelos had made the offer of the exchange of islands mentioned by Tewfik Pasha. The record is minuted by Sir Edward Grey: "I am quite willing to insert the word 'diplomatique' after 'influence' as desired by the Turks. E. G."]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 235-7, No. 255, and *encl.*]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 223, No. 238.]

Text as amended by Ottoman Government.

En ce qui concerne les Îles de la Mer Égée attribuées à la Grèce, le Gouvernement se déclare prêt comme ceux des autres Puissances à user de toute son influence diplomatique auprès de la Sublime Porte pour que le Gouvernement Hellénique ne puisse pas être troublé dans la possession de ces Îles.

[*ED. NOTE* —On April 24 M. de Etter informed Sir A. Nicolson that M. Sazonov withdrew his objections to the proposed note to Greece, and accepted the wording "influence amicale," Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 194) to Sir G. Buchanan, repeated to Sir F. Elliot (Nos. 61-2) of the same day, expressed Sir Edward Grey's sincere pleasure that M. Sazonov had found it possible to join the other Powers in presenting the note. (F.O. 18023/10259/14/53) The text of the note is given in the immediately succeeding document. Sir F. Elliot informed M. Venizelos on the same day that he had been instructed to state verbally "que les Puissances s'attendent à ce que l'Épire soit immédiatement évacuée." (F.O. 18956/10259/14/53.)]

No. 268.

Identic Note communicated to M. Venizelos.⁽¹⁾

*Légation de Sa Majesté Britannique,
Athènes, le 24 Avril 1914.*

F.O. 18956/10259/14/53.

Le soussigné, Ministre de Sa Majesté Britannique à Athènes, a été chargé par son Gouvernement de faire au Ministre Royal des Affaires Étrangères la communication suivante⁽²⁾ :—

Le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté a apprécié la valeur des assurances que le Gouvernement Hellénique a données, par sa Note en date du 8 (21) Février dernier,⁽³⁾ en ce qui concerne l'exécution des décisions collectives des Puissances relativement aux frontières de l'Albanie et à l'attribution des îles de la mer Égée. Il prend acte des engagements, contractés par le Gouvernement Hellénique, de procéder à l'évacuation des territoires occupés par ses troupes et attribués à l'Albanie; de ne secourir, ni directement, ni indirectement, aucune résistance à l'état de choses établi par les

⁽¹⁾ [Enclosure in Sir F. Elliot's despatch (No. 110), D. April 24, R. April 30. Sir F. Elliot stated that the note had been communicated by the representatives of the six Powers to M. Venizelos, because M. Streit was not well enough to receive them.]

⁽²⁾ [The text was based on the French draft which M. Paul Cambon gave to Sir A. Nicolson on March 27. (F.O. 13826/10259/14/53.) The only variations from this text are indicated in footnotes below. Sir Edward Grey sent a copy of the French draft for information to Paris (No. 173), to Berlin (No. 88), to Vienna (No. 43), to St. Petersburg (No. 125), to Rome (No. 76), to Constantinople (No. 172), to Athens (No. 30). He said "I understand that the French Government will propose the acceptance of this draft to the other Powers. I should be ready to accept it if all the other Powers agreed." Information was received from Vienna on April 4 that Austria-Hungary accepted the note (Sir M. de Bunsen's telegram (No. 51) of April 4, D. 7-27 p.m., R. 9 p.m. F.O. 16494/10259/14/53), but that Germany and Italy desired slight modifications. On April 17 Prince Lichnowsky communicated an amended text of the note, and Sir E. Goschen telegraphed (No. 44) on the same day, D. 8-50 p.m., R. 10-40 p.m., an account of the amendments (F.O. 17068/10259/14/53. 16915/10259/14/53). Austria-Hungary supported these modifications on the same day (Sir M. de Bunsen's telegram (No. 53) of April 17, F.O. 16916/10259/14/53), and Italy also (Sir R. Rodd's telegram (No. 65) of April 17, F.O. 17005/10259/14/53). The modifications are those indicated in the footnotes below showing the variations from the original French draft. The French acceptance of the modifications was reported by Sir F. Bertie in his telegram (No. 49) of April 22, 1913, D. 12-30 p.m., R. 12-45 p.m. (F.O. 17628/10259/14/53). M. Sazonov complained through M. de Etter on April 22 that he had not been consulted (F.O. 17023/10259/14/53), but instructions to present the revised note reached the Russian Minister at Athens on April 24 (F.O. 18956/10259/14/53).]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp. 235-7, No. 255, and *encl.*]

Puissances en Albanie méridionale; de restituer à la Turquie les îles d'Imbros, Ténédos et Castellorizo; d'obtenir le vote de la loi nécessaire à la cession de l'île de Sasseno: d'accorder toutes les garanties désirables aux minorités musulmanes des îles qui lui ont été attribuées.

En notifiant son acquiescement aux décisions des Puissances le Gouvernement Hellénique a formulé un certain nombre de vœux qui ont, depuis lors, fait l'objet du bienveillant examen des six Gouvernements.

Il a déjà été décidé par la Commission internationale de contrôle de l'Albanie qu'une complète égalité serait assurée aux populations, dans toute l'étendue de cet État, en ce qui concerne les droits des différentes religions et l'usage de toutes les langues. Le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique se déclare prêt, comme ceux des autres Puissances, à exercer toute son influence afin que le principe posé par la Commission de contrôle de l'Albanie soit mis en pratique et que des mesures effectives en assurent le bénéfice matériel et moral aux populations albanaises, notamment à celles des territoires qui doivent être évacués par les troupes grecques. Il est disposé à recommander au Gouvernement albanais, de concert avec ceux des autres Puissances, de prendre en considération la suggestion formulée par le Gouvernement Grec en ce qui concerne l'enrôlement d'éléments locaux dans la gendarmerie de l'Albanie méridionale.

Le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté, comme ceux des autres Puissances, se déclare prêt également à exercer toute son influence auprès du Gouvernement turc afin que les populations grecques des îles d'Imbros, Ténédos et Castellorizo reçoivent, sous la souveraineté ottomane, les garanties efficaces nécessaires à la sauvegarde de leurs intérêts religieux et scolaires.⁽⁴⁾

Le principe de la neutralisation du canal de Corfou ayant été posé par la réunion des Ambassadeurs à Londres, le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique se déclare prêt, également, comme ceux des autres Puissances, à participer à un accord international destiné à en fixer les conditions.

Un arrangement étant intervenu entre diverses Puissances et le Gouvernement Hellénique sur l'éventualité d'une rectification de la frontière greco-albanaise dans la région d'Argyrocastro, le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté déclare, comme ceux des autres Puissances, ne pas voir d'inconvénient à ce que ce projet de rectification reçoive effet.

Par contre, le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique déclare s'en tenir au tracé délimitatif qui a été adopté par les six Gouvernements pour la région de Koritsa, sans toutefois s'opposer à ce que, lors de l'établissement définitif de la frontière, il soit examiné si les vœux du Gouvernement Hellénique peuvent se concilier avec les directions indiquées dans ce tracé.

En ce qui concerne enfin les îles de la mer Égée attribuées à la Grèce, le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté se déclare prêt, comme ceux des autres Puissances, à user de son influence amicale⁽⁵⁾ auprès de la Sublime Porte pour que le Gouvernement Hellénique ne soit pas troublé⁽⁶⁾ dans la possession de ces îles et que la décision collective de l'Europe⁽⁷⁾ soit respectée par le Gouvernement ottoman.

Le soussigné saisit, &c.

F. ELLIOT.

(4) [The French draft added here "et que l'île de Castellorizo jouisse du régime spécial qui sera, ultérieurement, stipulé pour le Dodécanèse." This was omitted as the result of the amendments made by the Triple Alliance Powers.]

(5) [The French draft read here "à user de toute son influence." The omission of "toute" was the result of the amendments made by the Triple Alliance Powers. "Amicale" was added for the same reason.]

(6) [The French draft read here "ne puisse pas être troublé." The alteration here was for the same reason.]

(7) [The French draft added here "touchant leur neutralisation." The omission was suggested by the Triple Alliance Powers.]

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 19187/10259/14/53.

(No. 159.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, April 27, 1914.

In the course of my visit to Paris last week with the King and Queen, I spoke strongly to M. Iswolsky, urging that it was unreasonable and impolitic on the part of Russia to object to the modifications asked for by the Triple Alliance in the communication to be made in Athens. M. Sazonof seemed to think that the French draft Note was the beginning of the whole matter. But this was not so. Austria and Italy had first made a communication in Athens.⁽²⁾ The Triple Alliance had then proposed that we should make a communication endorsing it, and had in effect suggested that we should say little or nothing about the *Ægean Islands*. We had rejected this proposal on the part of the Triple Alliance, and had put forward the French draft as our own counter-proposal.⁽³⁾ The German Government had at first been rather annoyed at being presented with what they called a sort of ultimatum on the part of the Triple Entente. But the Triple Alliance had now, in point of fact, accepted the whole Note; and the modifications for which they asked were of very little importance.⁽⁴⁾ It would be most unreasonable, after we had rejected the original proposal of the Triple Alliance, and they had practically accepted our proposal, to refuse to agree to these small modifications. M. Venizelos was very anxious, I understood, to have the Note presented and his position would become very difficult if the Note was not presented. I urged these reasons upon M. Iswolsky, who informed me that he telegraphed them to St. Petersburg.

I found that the view that I took was entirely that of M. Doumergue also.

As the matter has since been settled, and M. Sazonof has withdrawn his objections, it is perhaps undesirable to re-open it with him. But, if it were re-opened, I should point out,—with regard to what M. Sazonof said, as described in your telegram number : 98,⁽⁵⁾ that the Powers were always going back upon what they had originally settled, and that the consequence would be that they would one day be faced by a serious situation,—that I originally refused to join in any communication in Athens and Constantinople on the subject of the Islands and the southern frontier of Albania unless the Powers would agree to make their decision respected. It was only because Russia and France had not taken this standpoint, and had expressed a desire to make the original communication in Athens and Constantinople without insisting on such an agreement, that I had reluctantly joined in making it, while at the same time disclaiming responsibility for any difficulties that might ensue. The situation that M. Sazonof deprecates now is one aspect of that which I had foreseen, but His Majesty's Government are not to blame for it.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 108-10, Nos 123-4.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. immediately preceding document, note* (2).]

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. immediately preceding document, notes* (2)-(7).]

⁽⁵⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 246, No. 266.]

No. 270.

Sir R. Rodd to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 19317/98/14/44.

(No. 159.) Confidential.

Sir,

Rome, D. April 28, 1914.

R. May 2, 1914.

I have learnt on very good authority that the present Government in Italy are very anxious now to see the question of the concession in Asia Minor and the contingent evacuation of the Ægean islands settled at as early a day as possible. As the evacuation has been determined the continued daily expenditure on the maintenance of garrisons there is a simple waste of public money, which just now they can ill afford, and they would be glad to terminate it without delay. It would be their object, if possible, to conclude a final liquidation of this issue by July when the Chamber will have adjourned. They would then have the three summer months clear without any risk of interpellations in Parliament to deal with public opinion and allow any effervescence of Chauvinism to settle down.

I have, &c.

RENNELL RODD.

No. 271.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir R. Rodd.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 20588/98/14/44.

(No. 130.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, May 6, 1914.

The Italian Ambassador explained to me to-day that his Government were spending £3,000 a day in the Islands of the Dodecanese, and that the Turks, knowing that the Islands were safe from Greece in the hands of Italy, and could be claimed by Turkey at any time, were in no hurry to recover them. The Italians were really anxious to evacuate the Islands and restore them to Turkey, but they could not do so unless Turkey would give them a concession. No Government could live in Italy for a day after giving up the Islands without some concession, especially after the disclosures in the Aziz Ali trial, which showed that the Turks had deliberately prosecuted operations in Tripoli long after the Treaty of Lausanne had been signed.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

No. 272.

Sir R. Rodd to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 22134/22134/14/19.

(No. 169.) Confidential.

Sir,

Rome, D. May 11, 1914.

R. May 18, 1914.

I have the honour to report that the German Emperor has just passed through the North of Italy, landing at Genoa on his return from Corfu.⁽²⁾ My German colleague who went to Genoa to meet His Majesty tells me that the Emperor had convinced himself that the Greeks were loyally doing their best to carry out the decisions of the

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. G.P.*, XXXVI (II), p. 578; XXXIX, p. 328, *note*; p. 355.]

Powers, the King, M. Venizelos and M. Streit could not justly be accused of having any ambitious designs at the present time, and were in reality not a little apprehensive as to the position of their country. The Emperor had instructed him to speak emphatically in this sense to the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs whose marked anti-Greek attitude was a matter of concern to His Majesty.

The policy of Italy with regard to Greece seemed to him a mistaken one, as if there was really a danger of the Slav expansion reaching the Adriatic, the Greeks would be an important element in the opposite scale and it was therefore rather the interest of Italy to conciliate them and not incur their enmity.

M. de Flotow also said that the Emperor had strongly urged the Greek Minister to endeavour to come to terms with Turkey. He seemed to think that while it was hardly to be expected that the Greeks would abandon Chios and Mitylene in exchange for the Southern Sporades, they might be induced to admit some form of Turkish suzerainty as long as they were allowed to control the Administration. He thought some compromise on this point might not be impossible. Failing any compromise, there was the danger that the Greeks might be tempted to take some step to prevent the new Dreadnought acquired in England from reaching Turkish waters.

M. de Flotow expressed the opinion that the difficulties which the Turkish Government were making about the proposed Italian concessions in Asia Minor were really motivated by the fact that they did not wish the Italian evacuation to take place just at present.

I have, &c.

RENNELL RODD.

No. 278.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 23215/13439/14/44.

(No. 365.)

Constantinople, D. May 21, 1914.

Sir,

R. May 25, 1914.

With reference to my immediately preceding despatch,⁽²⁾ I have the honour to state that I had, this afternoon, an opportunity of discussing with Djemal Pasha, the Minister of Marine, the present state of Turkish relations with Greece and the prospects of the preservation of peace.

Djemal Pasha said that the Government did not intend to make war upon Greece, of which I said I was already convinced, adding that I feared nevertheless that in the present state of feeling between the two countries a spark might set a light to the flame, and that I therefore deplored the policy of pin-pricks which the Government were pursuing. Making every allowance for the natural irritation caused to Turkey by the Greek occupation of the islands and by the expulsion of Mussulmans from Macedonia, it was so greatly in the Turkish interest not to provoke a war at the present moment that I was surprised at the lack of policy shown in the expulsions from Thrace, at the encouragement of boycotting which was reported from Smyrna and other parts of the country and generally at the treatment of the Greeks, whom it would seem a matter of common prudence to conciliate, at any rate until the arrival of the new units should put the Turkish Government in a better position to negotiate.

Djemal Pasha said that he entirely agreed with me and had himself maintained this view in the Cabinet and meant to carry it. At the same time, should the Greeks declare war now, the Fleet was ready to meet them without the new ships, and he was

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet. Copies were sent to the Admiralty; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [Sir L. Mallet's despatch (No. 364), D. May 21, R. May 25, 1914, is not reproduced. It enclosed a Memorandum by Captain Boyle, the British Naval Attaché at Constantinople, on the naval situation of Greece and Turkey. (F.O. 23214/13439/14/19.)]

confident of victory. If they were defeated they lost nothing but what had already gone, namely the islands. It must be remembered, moreover, that they had a weapon in their hands which they meant to use, which would soon bring the Greek Government to reason in the expulsion of all Greeks from the Empire which they would proceed to carry out if necessary.

I said that the outbreak of war between Greece and Turkey, now or at any time, would be deplorable, and should at all costs be averted. The expulsion of the Greeks from Turkey would, it was true, be a most serious blow to Greece and would be deeply resented, but besides being cruelly unjust to the individuals involved, Turkey herself would ultimately and even at once suffer far more than Greece through losing the greater proportion of her industrial population, engaged in pursuits uncongenial to the Turks themselves and the source of a large proportion of Turkish wealth. The Turkish nationalists point of view was based on an economic heresy of an elementary kind; they required the Greek element to supplement their own lack of economic initiative and if they had their proper interests at heart they should do their best to conciliate and attract them.

I recalled to Djemal Pasha's mind the conversation which I had had with him some months previously, soon after my arrival, when I dwelt upon the greater advantage of improving the administration of the Asiatic provinces than of pursuing a sterile policy of war and revenge.⁽³⁾ Djemal Pasha thanked me, and assured me, with sincerity, I believe, that he still entirely agreed with me, and that I might rely on him to insist in the Cabinet upon the cessation of the present policy towards the Greeks. At the same time he let me understand that the Turkish Government meant to recover the islands of Chios and Mitylene, relying on the moral effect, which their naval strength, increased as it would be shortly by the presence of the new Dreadnoughts, would have in persuading the Greek Government, who had more to lose than they had, of the prudence of arriving at a friendly solution of this question.

I have heard it argued that it would be better in the long run to let the Greeks attack and destroy the Turkish fleet before the new units arrived. Such is not my view. I believe that if hostilities broke out now, although untold misery to the Greek populations of the Empire would be inevitable, the result would not be decisive, and that, if the war be postponed, it may be altogether averted.

I have, &c.

LOUIS MALLET.

(3) [Sir L. Mallet's language was approved by Sir Edward Grey in his despatch (No. 357) of June 5, 1914. (F.O. 23215/13439/14/44.)]

No. 274.

Sir F. Elliot to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 24936/13439/14 19.

At Sea, D. May 28, 1914.

Sir.

R. June 4, 1914.

On my taking leave of M. Venizelos yesterday His Excellency begged me to lay before you the difficulty of his situation *vis-a-vis* of Turkey. It was becoming daily more apparent that the Young Turks, elated by the easy recapture of Adrianople without a word from Europe in support of the previous decisions of the Powers, were dreaming of similar success in the islands, and of pushing their conquests to any extent—as far as Crete perhaps. It was certain that they were only waiting to be in possession of their first "Dreadnought" to declare war upon Greece, or to oblige Greece to declare war upon them, and M. Venizelos seriously doubted whether he would be justified in allowing that moment to arrive and whether, if Greece did not herself in the meantime acquire a "Dreadnought," which she was not likely to do, it

(1) [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet. A copy was sent to the Admiralty.]

would not be better to incur the odium in the eyes of Europe of declaring war while she still retained the superiority in naval armaments. The war would be an entirely maritime one. He knew for certain that the Turkish army was entirely disintegrated and in no condition to fight, and the Bulgarian army was in no better case. As regards the Greek army, at any rate the stores and magazines were fairly full.

I remarked that in that case the principal sufferers would be England and Russia, owing to the disturbance of their trade. He said the way to prevent that was for Turkey not to close the Dardanelles, and on my objecting that she could hardly be asked to forgo this means of defence, he said that Greece might undertake not to pass the Dardanelles. I said that the result would be a stalemate, the Turkish fleet remaining inside the Dardanelles and the Greek fleet outside, for I did not suppose he would contemplate landing an army in Asia Minor. He admitted that that would raise very big questions, but suggested that Smyrna was vulnerable. I replied that there again foreign trade interests were very important.

I said I was more than ever convinced that the right course would be to exchange Mitylene for the Dodecanese, and I asked if the Turks had lately made any overtures in that direction. M. Venizelos said they had not, and that he had all along taken his stand on the impossibility of Greece giving up a position secured to her by a decision of the Powers. (M. Streit reasserted that attitude in a speech in the Chamber a few days ago.) Nevertheless he would be prepared to entertain a suggestion that he should take the Twelve Islands and give up Mitylene, for the sake of being on good terms with Turkey. The surrender of Chios was out of the question, owing to the memories of the massacre and enslavement of the population during the war of independence. Mitylene was rich and the islands poor, but he would be ready to waive that consideration. The population was of about the same number—240,000. Some kind of autonomy would have to be given to Mitylene, with a Christian Governor, and a guarantee that the existing relative proportions between the Christian and Mussulman populations should not be changed by an influx of Mussulman refugees or other settlers. But the difficulty was this. No word must be said to Italy of any question of the cession of the Dodecanese by Turkey to Greece, for Italy would certainly object. I said that according to appearances Italy was now really anxious to return the islands to Turkey, provided she got concessions. M. Venizelos said that Turkey preferred that Italy should keep the islands for the present, in order that Greece should not be able to take them if war should break out, and she would therefore be in no hurry to give the concessions. There was a kind of vicious circle.

The prize of war, if it came, would be the possession of the Turkish fleet.

M. Venizelos particularly desired to draw your attention, as the Minister of an Empire containing a large Mussulman population, to the dangerous spirit which would be aroused among Mussulmans all over the world if Turkey should be victorious over Greece and should succeed a second time in recovering territory which United Europe had adjudged her to have lost.

On my taking leave of him M. Venizelos asked me to repeat our conversation to you, Sir, and to say how grateful he would be for any suggestion from you as to the line he should take.

I have, &c.

F. ELLIOT.

MINUTES.

The danger of war between Greece and Turkey is serious and such a war will involve a difficult and unpleasant position for us, whose officers are training the combatants' navies. In my humble opinion we should therefore take any chance that offers, such as this, to help towards peace.

I agree with Sir F. Elliot that the exchange of Mitylene for the Dodecanese is the simplest solution, if M. Venizelos is strong enough to carry it through, and, if he is, I think we should

support the proposal at Constantinople, even though it involves telling the Turks that they will have to give the Italians the Adalia concessions.

G. R. C.
4.6.14.

I agree, and if necessary, we should speak sharply to Italy if she raises any objection to the Dodecanese passing to Greece.

Copy Admiralty (Secret).

E. A. C.
June 4.

I must see Sir F. Elliot when he is in London.

E. G.

Sir E. Grey has since seen Sir F. Elliot.

H. N.
13 6 14.

No. 275.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 24801/18489/14/19.

Tel. (No. 10.) Confidential.

Bucharest, May 30, 1914.

My telegram No. 9 of 24th May.⁽²⁾

The Prime Minister tells me that, during Talaat Bey's visit, the Roumanian Government had repeated to him a warning given to Turkey last winter against any land operations against Greece and had generally given him counsels of moderation. Talaat had expressed pacific intentions, but had made it clear that Turkey would not give way about the islands and insists on the sovereignty of Chios and Mitylene.

To some of my colleagues Talaat intimated that Turkey intended to postpone further negotiations with Greece until the two Dreadnoughts were ready, when she would be able to negotiate with irresistible force.

(Sent to Constantinople and Athens.)

⁽¹⁾ [The text given above is taken from the *Confidential Print*, as the original decypher cannot be traced.]

⁽²⁾ [Sir G. Barclay's telegram (No. 9) of May 24, 1914, is not reproduced. The contents were stated more fully in Sir G. Barclay's despatch (No. 35), D. May 28, R. June 8, 1914. Talaat Bey, Turkish Minister of the Interior, arrived at Bucharest on May 24, and left for Constantinople on the 28th. As he was not Minister for Foreign Affairs, his visit was not considered official, though he had an audience of the King and interviewed the Prime Minister and other leading personages. He had been told that so long as Turkey's intentions were pacific she could count on the friendship of Rumania. (F.O. 25549/23139/14/37.)]

No. 276.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 24804/18489/14/19.

Tel. (No. 13.) Confidential.

Bucharest, May 30, 1914.

My telegram No. 10 of 30th May.⁽²⁾

Minister for Foreign Affairs is disturbed by the present position between Turkey and Greece. He has given to Greece as well as to Turkey counsels of moderation, and has received from her a pacific reply, but he has learned from Berlin that Greece,

⁽¹⁾ [The text given above is taken from the *Confidential Print*, as the original decypher cannot be traced.]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

anticipating Turkey's naval superiority in the near future, is thinking of precipitating matters or of preventing the arrival in Turkey of the two Dreadnoughts ordered by the latter.

(Private.)

Minister for Foreign Affairs asked me privately whether His Majesty's Government could in any way hinder the delivery of the Dreadnoughts to Turkey, and at what moment of their voyage Dreadnoughts would hoist the Turkish flag. To the first question I replied that I thought not, and to the second that I did not know.

(Sent to Constantinople and Athens.)

No. 277.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 24312/13439/14/19.

Tel. (No. 305.)

Constantinople, June 1, 1914.

Sir G. Barclay's telegram No. 13 of 30th May.⁽²⁾

The adoption of the Roumanian Minister for Foreign Affairs' suggestion, even if practicable, would be ineffectual.

For the reasons given in my despatch No. 364 of 21st May,⁽³⁾ a successful war provoked by Greece would not necessarily end conflict so long as capital ships formed part of Turkey's fleet, though undelivered.

The Turkish Government think that there is a better chance of Greece listening to reason after the arrival of the Dreadnoughts. If not, matters would presumably take their course unless the Powers could persuade Greece to accept a reasonable settlement. Coercion of Turkey presents fewer attractions than ever, and a financial boycott, even if possible, would be unlikely to succeed.

⁽¹⁾ [The text given above is taken from the *Confidential Print*, as the original decypher cannot be traced.]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

⁽³⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 252, No. 273, note (2).]

No. 278.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 25462/13439/14/19.

(No. 404.)

Constantinople, D. June 2, 1914.

Sir,

R. June 8, 1914.

With reference to my despatch No. 402 of today's date,⁽²⁾ in which I mentioned a conversation which I had with Djemal Pasha in regard to Turco-Greek relations, I am of opinion that Ministers are desirous of avoiding war with Greece if they can obtain what they want, namely the restoration of Scio and Mitylene to Turkish sovereignty by peaceful means. As it does not seem from Monsieur Streit's last speech that the Greek Government have, at any rate for the present, any intention of negotiating on a basis which the Turkish Government would accept, the chance of ultimate hostilities, if the Greek disposition does not change and unless other circumstances supervene, cannot altogether be disregarded.

As I often before have had occasion to observe it is not probable that this Government, which came into power with the express purpose of recovering lost

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

⁽²⁾ [Sir L. Mallet's despatch (No. 402), D. June 2, R. June 8, 1914, is not reproduced as the contents are sufficiently indicated above. (F.O. 25460/9137/14/19).]

territory and which has constantly declared that the restoration of Scio and Mitylene to Turkish sovereignty is essential to the safety of the Empire, will in the long run be content with the present arrangement. Should negotiations ultimately prove fruitless, however desirous the Turkish Government may be of refraining from war, they may find it the sole means of carrying out their programme. That they contemplate or desire the provocation of war in the near future, I should be slow to believe, as it would not be in their interests that hostilities should break out for some months to come and if war can be averted altogether they realise fully that it would be better to avoid it. I am, therefore, not totally despondent as to the future, though it contains elements of great risk. The experience of the last few months would render it impossible to retain any illusions that the Turks might acquiesce in the retention of Scio and Mitylene by Greece. Sir R. Crawford told me a few days ago that the contraband trade from the islands assumed such serious proportions as to oblige him to send a special customs officer to the spot to study the means of checking it. He said that the revenue cutters worked at great disadvantages being obliged to confine their operations to the immediate proximity of the coast, lest they should transgress the limits of the territorial waters of Greece. Whether justified or not, the Turkish authorities on the mainland are for ever on the qui vive, Djemal Pasha telling me a few days ago that Greek raiding parties had been recently landing near Gallipoli and carried off the belongings of the peasantry. There is probably much exaggeration in these reports, but they show a high degree of tension and are of bad augury for the peaceful acceptance of the present arrangements.

The Italian Ambassador, who has recently returned from Rome, is concerned at the prospects and does not disguise his fears lest hostilities may be the result, though he hopes that they will be confined to the sea.

My Russian colleague has, as I have reported,⁽³⁾ betrayed anxiety lest the Turkish capital ships be the subject of an attack by the Greeks on their way out to Turkey and has asked me in confidence whether it would be possible for them to come out under the British mercantile flag, which is perhaps nothing more than an indication of his desire that war may be averted but may also to some extent be regarded as indicating that he would personally favour some modification of the present distribution of the islands; probably with a special view of assigning Lemnos to Turkey; its attribution to Greece having always, I understand, been the subject of regret to Monsieur de Giers, owing to its strategical position as commanding the entrance of the Dardanelles.

In connection with this question I asked the Grand Vizier yesterday whether Talaat Bey's visit to Bucharest⁽⁴⁾ had been productive of any good results. His Highness said that the Roumanian attitude had been very friendly and that he thought that they would be happy to help matters if they could, but that at present no negotiations were going on. I then enquired whether the negotiations had begun for the restitution of the Dodecanese by Italy or had made any progress since the return of my Italian colleague. His Highness replied in the negative saying that he had no anxiety on the point of their ultimate restitution, but was not desirous of recovering them now, because they were safer in the hands of Italy until the Turkish fleet were able to protect them. If the Italians left them it would be open to the Greeks to go in and as his experience of the European Powers did not lead him to expect their assistance in turning them out, he preferred that the question should stand over for the present.

Since the failure of any result from the indirect overtures which there is little doubt were made to Greece by Turkey some time back for an exchange of islands,⁽⁵⁾ much less has been heard of this plan of arranging the question, which is less likely to be revived once the Turkish fleet is strong enough to hold its own.

I have, &c.

LOUIS MALLET.

⁽³⁾ [This report cannot be identified.]

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 255, No. 275, and *note* (2).]

⁽⁵⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp. 184-5, No. 199; p. 223, No. 238.]

Sir M. de Bunsen to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 25489/13439/14/19.

(No. 109.) Confidential.

Vienna, D. June 4, 1914.

Sir,

R. June 8, 1914.

Hilmi Pasha, Turkish Ambassador at Vienna, returns next week to Constantinople on leave of absence. He had expressed a desire to withdraw into private life, but I understand that he has yielded to the request of the Ottoman Government that he will continue to represent the Sultan at this post. I have recorded in previous despatches His Excellency's views on the Islands question as affecting the relations between Turkey and Greece (Nos. 14 of January 12th.⁽²⁾ and 25 of January 27th.⁽³⁾) and as he has repeatedly reverted to the subject in conversations with the French Ambassador and Greek Minister as well as with myself, I feel it my duty once more to place before you the line of argument which it seems likely that His Excellency will employ in his interviews with public men in Constantinople. Hilmi Pasha starts from the assumption that Turkey can never willingly acquiesce in the attribution of Chios and Mitylene to Greece. Such an arrangement would constitute, in his opinion, a first step towards the partition of Asiatic Turkey, and the Ottoman Government is determined to resist the distribution of the Islands, ordained by the Powers, at all times by the most effective means at his disposal. These may take the form either of open warfare, or of passive resistance, according to circumstances. His Excellency seems to be personally persuaded that his country would best be able to attain its object by patiently waiting till the shifting politics of the Balkans offer her an opportunity of throwing her weight into the balance against Greece. There can be no really friendly relation with Greece so long as the latter holds fast to the letter of the arrangements contemplated by the Powers. Nor can there be any permanent peace in the Balkans so long as Turkey is admittedly looking out for a pretext to compel compliance with her just demands. On the other hand if Greece is wise enough to come to terms with Turkey, the tranquillity of the Balkan peninsula will be, in a large measure, secured, and both countries will be in a position to spare themselves the enormous financial strain of building modern fleets against each other. His Excellency's solution of the difficulty is an exchange between Chios and Mitylene on the one hand and the Dodecanese on the other. Greece, he understands, has already made some timid advances to Turkey on these lines, but was discouraged by receiving at Constantinople the reply that only two or three islands of the Dodecanese could be offered in exchange. Hilmi Pasha entirely disapproves of any such process of bargaining. In the first place he asserts that Turkey, under present conditions, would be unable to administer satisfactorily any portion of the Dodecanese. She may as well give up the whole group to Greece. To the objection that Italy would probably refuse her consent to a combination shutting the door permanently against her re-entry into the Dodecanese after giving it up to Turkey, Hilmi Pasha replies that Italy would be compelled to accept the situation, for Turkey would refuse to grant any concession whatever to Italy in Asia Minor except in return for the unconditional return of the Dodecanese into the hands of the Ottoman Government, which would then be at liberty to hand it over to Greece. Failing a settlement on the above basis, Hilmi Pasha is convinced that the reoccupation of this group of islands by Italy, if indeed Italy ever evacuates it, is only a matter of time. The Powers desiring the maintenance of the *status quo* in the Mediterranean are therefore deeply interested, His Excellency thinks, in seeing a settlement in conformity with the aims of Turkey.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet. It was sent to Athens (as No. 99) on June 18.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 183-9, No. 202.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 201-2, No. 215.]

Hilmi Pasha has told the French Ambassador that he intends to use all his influence in Turkey to promote the exchange which he thinks so essential to the peace of the Balkans. M. Dumaine intends to urge his Government to give Greece a friendly warning and His Excellency informs me that M. Gryparis, Greek Minister at Vienna, has been considerably impressed by Hilmi Pasha's persistency in putting forward the views outlined above and is advising M. Venizelos to consider seriously whether the interests of Greece would not be better served by an understanding with Turkey in the manner suggested.

I have, &c.

MAURICE DE BUNSEN.

No. 280.

Sir E. Goschen to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 26912/13439/14/19.

Tel. (No. 71.)

Berlin, June 15, 1914.

Turkey and Greece.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, while rather of the opinion that both Governments are bluffing, is nevertheless rather uneasy about the situation. He thinks that Roumania may be useful as a mediator, and informs me that he is telegraphing to the German representative at Bucharest to urge the Roumanian Government to use their good offices to prevent matters from coming to a crisis. Should hostilities break out, he is strongly of the opinion that the Great Powers should join in seeing that the war is localised and, if possible, confined to the Ægean Sea.⁽²⁾

⁽¹⁾ [The text given above is taken from the *Confidential Print*, as the original decypher cannot be traced.]

⁽²⁾ [For Sir Edward Grey's reply to this telegram, v. *infra*, p. 262, No. 284.]

No. 281.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 27070/9137/14/19.

Tel. (No. 340.)

Constantinople, D. June 15, 1914.

R. June 16, 1914.

Athens telegram No. 101 of 14th June.⁽²⁾

Situation continues to be serious. Greek Minister has delivered stiff note, which demands cessation of expulsions, repatriation of refugees, and restoration of their property.

Only direct news from Smyrna since His Majesty's consul-general's telegrams repeated to you on 13th June⁽³⁾ is in telegram received to-day stating that one of the Whittalls was witness of serious events at Phocæa, which bands of Moslem refugees entered on the 11th instant, killing and plundering.

⁽¹⁾ [The text given above is taken from the *Confidential Print*, as the original decypher cannot be traced.]

⁽²⁾ [Mr. Erskine's telegram (No. 101) of June 14, 1914, stated that the Greek Government were anxious to avoid war, but that Turkey's failure to comply with demands made at Constantinople by the Greek Government for "cessation of expulsion, repatriation of refugees, and return of property" would confirm their conviction that war would come eventually, and that they might prefer to attack while they had their naval superiority. (F.O. 26684/9137/14/19.)]

⁽³⁾ [Sir L. Mallet's telegrams (Nos. 338-9) of June 13, 1914, repeated reports from the Consul-General at Smyrna indicating that the situation was more satisfactory. The Minister of the Interior, Talaat Bey, had arrived in Smyrna on June 12. (F.O. 26680/9137/14/19. 26681/9137/14/19.) *cp. infra*, pp. 262-4, No. 286; pp. 266-7, No. 292.]

Greek Minister communicates telegrams to me daily maintaining that there is no improvement in the situation at all.

Vice-consul at Dardanelles corroborates this in so far as his district is concerned, where he says that campaign of ejection and plunder has recommenced, and that Greek refugees at Erenkeui are in position of danger. Vice-consul at Brussa also telegraphs that ejection of Greeks has begun from villages round Brussa, and that he is recipient of many appeals for protection. I was again assured on the 13th instant by the Grand Vizier that they were doing everything possible to stop movement and restore order, but it is not possible to reconcile these assurances with the state of things at the Dardanelles except on the supposition that the task of restoring order and checking the movement is at present beyond the power of the Government.

I am inclined to think that Grand Vizier and Minister may be sincere now, but that they have been privy to policy of ejecting Greeks from coast opposite Mitylene and Chios and from the Dardanelles, and may find it difficult to stop the movement which is being worked by the Chauvinists of the Committee. I and my colleagues are making most serious representations to the Grand Vizier again to-day, and a few days more must elapse before it is possible to say definitely whether movement is under control or not. In the meantime hundreds of Moslem refugees are still arriving in this country, who are as great a source of embarrassment to Government as are Greek refugees to Greek Government.

French ship of war, which happened to be near, has been sent to Athens.

Athens telegram seems to confirm opinion held by many that Greek Government are determined to bring matters to a head at once, and that, short of an absolute surrender on the part of the Porte, they may declare war in order to cripple Turkish fleet before arrival of Dreadnought.

Any one action would not, I fear, settle matters definitely between Greece and Turkey unless Greek forces were able to do considerably more than destroy Turkish fleet.

In present temper of Government, it is not possible to say what would be the results for Greek population, not to speak of other Christians, but wholesale expulsion would almost certainly follow declaration of war.

My French colleague and I have given our views to Roumanian Minister, who goes to Bucharest to-morrow. Roumanian Government, who are desirous of maintaining Treaty of Bucharest, might usefully give pacific advice at Athens, for, in present state of things in the Balkan Peninsula, it would be rash to assume that war would be merely naval, and confined to Greeks and Turks.

(Confidential.)

Military attaché saw Greek military attaché this morning. He expressed contempt for Turkish naval and military power at the moment, and, although he would not say what Greek forces would attempt in case of war, he gave military attaché to understand that Greek staff have some definite plan in view if hostilities are opened.

(Sent to Athens.)

No. 282.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 27587/13489/14/19.

(No. 390.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, June 15, 1914.

The French and Russian Ambassadors spoke to me to-day with apprehension about the prospect of war between Greece and Turkey. The Servian Minister had

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet. It was repeated to St. Petersburg (No. 231). A copy (confidential) was sent to the Admiralty on June 24.]

already expressed apprehension that, if Greece had to withdraw her troops to fight Turkey, and thus exposed Salonika, Bulgaria would take advantage of the situation and everything would be in a blaze.

I said that everything depended upon whether Turkey forced her way through Thrace and attacked Greece on land. If she did not do this, there would be no reason why any Greek troops should be moved, for I did not suppose that Greece would attempt a descent on the mainland of Asia Minor. My information was that the Turkish army was not in a condition to move, and that Turkey would not attempt to force her way through the Bulgarian part of Thrace, nor would Bulgaria willingly allow her to do so. If this was so, Turkey and Greece could do very little against each other: for Greece was already in possession of the Ægean Islands that she had occupied, and the Turkish fleet would probably not come out and fight the Greek fleet. The important thing was that Turkey would close the Straits, as a defensive measure against Greece, and the Straits might remain closed for weeks or months. This was the aspect of the question that I meant to bring before the Cabinet. If we intervened at all, it would be to keep the Straits open, because any closing of the Straits caused no end of trouble and loss to British shipping.

The Russian Ambassador said that he would inform his Government of what I had said, because the closing of the Straits stopped the Russian export trade. It would be very desirable, he thought, that steps should be taken before the Straits were actually closed. It would, however, be necessary to prevent Turkish warships from going out of the Straits, as well as Greek warships from going into them.

I said that, though it was only my own "primâ facie" opinion, I thought that we might send warships to the mouth of the Straits to guarantee that, if Turkey kept the Straits open for merchant ships, no Greek warship would be allowed to go through. On the other hand, it would be necessary to prevent Turkish warships from coming out; but we could hardly take a measure of that kind unless Turkey had first, by closing the Straits, shown that she did not intend her own fleet to come out and fight. In that event, we should be justified in saying to her that, as she clearly did not mean her own fleet to come out, she could lose nothing by opening the Straits with a guarantee from us that Greek warships would not be allowed to enter to attack her.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

No. 283.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 27589/98/14/44.

(No. 184.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, June 15, 1914.

I remarked to the German Ambassador to-day, when we were talking of the acute crisis between Greece and Turkey, that, according to my information, a little time ago M. Venizelos would have considered giving Mytilene to Turkey in return for the Dodecanese, but would not give up Chios. Whether such a deal was still possible in the present state of feeling, I did not know.

The Ambassador said that he thought that Italy would never consent to the Dodecanese being given to Greece.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King.]

No. 284.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen.

F.O. 26912/18489/14/19.

Tel. (No. 156.)

*Foreign Office, June 16, 1914, 3.30 P.M.*Your telegram No. 71 of June 15.⁽¹⁾

I agree with view expressed in last sentence as to attitude of Great Powers, but it is also most important that Straits should not be closed against merchant ships, and I think we should consider whether in event of war breaking out Straits can be kept open for merchant ships on conditions that will not expose Constantinople to attack from Greece.

I had some reason lately to suppose that though Greece will not give up Chios, she might consider a deal with Turkey about Mytilene, but tension seems too acute for this suggestion to be of use at the moment, and there are difficulties involved in it.

You can inform M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] of my views.

(¹) [*v. supra*, p. 259, No. 280.]

No. 285.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir L. Mallet.

F.O. 27070/9187/14/19.

Tel. (No. 266.)

*Foreign Office, June 16, 1914, 7 P.M.*Your telegram No. 840.⁽¹⁾

I do not know what Greek or Turkish war plans may be, but closing of the Straits to merchant vessels for any length of time will be intolerable. I think H[is] M[ajesty's] Gov[ernment] would have to contemplate measures if necessary, to enable Turkey to keep Straits open to merchant vessels without risk of being attacked through the Straits by Greece, but this would imply that Turkish fleet did not come out of the Straits. It is premature as yet to make any proposal on the subject to Turkey and it is not easy to frame one, but I should like you to consider the matter in view of future contingencies.

(¹) [*v. supra*, pp. 259-60, No. 281.]

No. 286.

Mr. Erskine to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 29187/18489/14/19.

(No. 160.) Confidential.

Sir,

*Athens, D. June 16, 1914.**R. June 29, 1914.*

Although the relations between this country and Turkey have been strained for some time past, owing to the long series of mutual recriminations regarding the question of the refugees, until the beginning of last week there was little to indicate the imminence of the grave crisis which has now arisen. So lately as the 4th instant the Minister for Foreign Affairs informed Mr. Hope Vere that relations with Turkey had improved, and I gathered the same impression from Monsieur Venizelos during my recent visit to Corfu. The Greek Government had accepted the Turkish proposal for an exchange of the Moslem population of Macedonia with the Greek refugees from both Thrace and Asia Minor, and an agreement had almost been reached as to

(¹) [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King. Copies were sent on July 9 to the Admiralty; to the Director of Military Operations.]

conditions which should govern this exchange. Unfortunately these negotiations coincided with a renewed and more violent outbreak of the anti-Greek movement, which in its turn reacted upon public opinion here. At his weekly reception on the 11th instant, Monsieur Streit informed me and my colleagues that it was impossible to continue the negotiations, that Mitylene and Chios were filled to overflowing with refugees, that thousands were waiting on the coast for ships to take them away and thousands more were arriving daily from the interior in a pitiable state of destitution. The flourishing town of Aivali was surrounded by Bashi-Bazouks, who threatened to burn it and massacre the inhabitants. If this occurred public opinion would force the Government to take drastic action, even to the length of declaring war. The Government were sincerely desirous of maintaining peace and had throughout adopted a most conciliatory attitude; even on the Islands question they had let it be known that they were prepared to give favourable consideration to any proposals put forward, but not a single definite proposal on this subject had been made to them by the Ottoman Government and it was becoming clear that the latter had no real intention of accepting any reasonable compromise. The same evening Monsieur Venizelos made in the Chamber a strongly worded statement, a summary of which I had the honour to forward in my despatch No. 154 of the 12th instant.⁽²⁾

On the 13th instant Monsieur Streit informed me that while reports from Aivali were better, they were worse from other places, and it was becoming clear that the Turkish Government either could not or would not put an end to this state of things which had now become intolerable.

Although the immediate cause of the present position is the ill-treatment of the Greek subjects of the Ottoman Empire, the root of the matter undoubtedly lies in the refusal of the Powers to guarantee Greece in the possession of the Islands assigned to her under the recent settlement. The purchase of Dreadnoughts by Turkey has convinced this country that the latter has no intention of accepting that settlement and her own inability to find ships of a similar class and in the same advanced state of construction has precipitated the crisis.

It would perhaps be going too far to say that the Greek Government have, as is thought in some quarters, deliberately provoked the present situation, but I have little doubt that the above considerations have led them to adopt a more uncompromising attitude over the refugees question than they might otherwise have done, and that they are not sorry that matters should have been brought to a head. A further factor which may influence Greece in favour of war now rather than later is that the arrangements recently made with Servia and Roumania would appear to obviate for the present the danger of Bulgarian intervention. Monsieur Streit appears to have no anxiety on this score and from a remark which he made to me I gather that even the failure of Bulgaria to take effective steps to prevent the passage of Turkish troops across Thrace would be a *casus foederis*. Although these arrangements would doubtless be respected now circumstances may easily arise in the future to render them of no value.

Public opinion has so far remained calm, but any weakening in the attitude of the Government would certainly give rise to an outburst of indignation which Monsieur Venizelos would be unable to withstand. War is commonly regarded here as a matter of days, and it is certainly difficult to see how it can be avoided unless Turkey gives full satisfaction or the Powers intervene.

In the event of war it is not clear what effective action the Greek fleet can take, and unless they can destroy the Turkish fleet the position in the future will be much the same as now. Admiral Kerr tells me in confidence that some time ago he

⁽²⁾ [Mr. Erskine's despatch (No. 154), D. June 12, R. June 25, 1914, merely enclosed a summary of M. Venizelos' statement, and said that "it was announced in this morning's newspapers that an ultimatum was to be presented this morning to the Ottoman Government." Mr. Erskine commented: "This report is, I believe, untrue, but I understand that the Greek Minister at Constantinople has been instructed to make energetic representations on the subject and to demand compensation for the losses incurred by the Greek refugees." (F.O. 27394/9137/14/19.)]

submitted a rather bold plan of action, which he thought offered good prospects of success, but he does not know whether the Government will adopt it. They have in other matters repeatedly preferred to listen to the advice of ignorant Greek Officers rather than his own, and it was only with great difficulty that he induced them recently to lay in a store of ammunition. He says moreover that there is a serious shortage of officers and of trained men.

I have, &c.

WILLIAM ERSKINE.

No. 287.

Mr. Erskine to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 29188/13489/14/19.

(No. 161.) Confidential.

Sir,

Athens, D. June 16, 1914.

R. June 29, 1914.

With reference to my immediately preceding despatch,⁽²⁾ I have the honour to report that the Turkish Minister read to me yesterday a circular telegram which had just arrived from his Government to the effect that the Ottoman Government had received a Note from the Greek Minister making certain demands in regard to the Greeks in Asia Minor,⁽³⁾ that they refused to admit the right of Greece to interfere in their internal affairs, and must decline all responsibility for the consequences. He was uncertain as to whether he was intended to communicate this to the Greek Government as the Turkish reply to their demands or whether it was a communication to the Great Powers which was repeated for his information.

He seems to have come to the conclusion that the latter was the correct interpretation, as, in answer to my enquiry this morning, the Minister for Foreign Affairs stated that no reply had as yet been received. Rumours as to the nature of the telegram in question had got about and His Excellency said that if the reply proved to be of the uncompromising nature indicated by them a peaceful issue would be impossible.

I asked him if the Greek Government appreciated the grave risk of entering upon a war the issue of which was by no means certain. It was not easy to see what they could gain even if it were successful. Its immediate result would be to intensify the sufferings of the Greek population of the Ottoman Empire and the cost of maintaining the refugees until homes could be found for them in Greek territory would be a trifle in comparison with that of a war. My information from Constantinople went to show that the Ottoman Government were doing all they could to improve matters and that the persecutions and expulsions of Greeks were largely the work of agents who had got out of hand.

Monsieur Streit admitted all this but said that things had reached a point at which to yield was impossible. It would mean the end of Hellenism.

He had for some time past been of opinion that the Turkish Government were losing control over their agents, but the Government had originated the anti-Greek movement and could not now escape from the responsibility for its results.

I have, &c.

WILLIAM ERSKINE.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King.]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

⁽³⁾ [The Greek note was presented to the Porte on June 12, 1914. *cp. supra*, p. 259, No. 281; p. 263, No. 286, note ⁽²⁾. The Turkish reply was delivered on June 18. v. Sir L. Mallet's despatch (No. 451), D. June 20, R. June 25, 1914. (F.O. 28551/9137/14/19.) Mr. Erskine's telegram (No. 106) of June 19, 1914, described it as "conciliatory" and stated that the "Greek Government are fairly well satisfied."]

No. 288.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 27561/18489/14/19.

Tel. (No. 20.) Confidential.

Bucharest, June 18, 1914.

Russian Minister informs me that during M. Sazonof's visit⁽²⁾ identic instructions were sent to Russian Ambassador and Roumanian Minister at Constantinople to point out to Porte that Turco-Greek tension had already affected Russian and Roumanian trade, and to call Porte's serious attention to difficulty of situation in which Russia and Roumania would be placed if Turkey took any measures to close the Dardanelles.

(Sent to Constantinople.)

⁽¹⁾ [The text given above is taken from the *Confidential Print*, as the original decypher cannot be traced.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. infra*, pp. 334-6, Nos. 372-3. *cp. also G.P.*, XXXIX, pp. 520-5.]

No. 289.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 27562/18489/18/19.

Tel. (No. 21.)

*Bucharest, June 18, 1914.*My telegram No. 18 of 17th June.⁽²⁾

Minister for Foreign Affairs tells me that Servia, foreseeing that she was likely to be drawn into a war by Greece, had appealed to Roumania to urge moderation at Athens, and he now learns from Belgrade that attitude of Greece is more calm. I gather from his Excellency that this is largely due to Greek Government realising that they could not count upon Roumania's restraining Bulgaria from helping Turkey in a war provoked by Greece, and that Roumania had pointed out at Athens that neither of the two questions of islands and Turco-Greeks in Turkey has reached stage to warrant war.

(Sent to Constantinople, Athens, Sophia, and Belgrade.)

⁽¹⁾ [The text given above is taken from the *Confidential Print*, as the original decypher cannot be traced.]

⁽²⁾ [Sir G. Barclay's telegram (No. 18) of June 17, 1914, D 11-10 A.M., R. 2-10 P.M., stated that the Minister for Foreign Affairs hoped that matters would calm down, and that he felt sure that, if Greece attacked Turkey, Bulgaria would join Turkey, and Rumania would not interfere. (F.O. 27366/18439/14/19.)]

No. 290.

Mr. Erskine to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 28533/18489/14/19.

Tel. (No. 111.) Confidential.

Athens, June 24, 1914.

Greek Government are considering question of issue of Royal decree annexing islands assigned to Greece and ceding those assigned to Turkey. Minister for Foreign Affairs says that they refrained from this step during acute stage of crisis, having heard that Turkey would regard it as act of provocation and not wishing to add fuel to the fire, but that it is required by law and is being demanded by public opinion. I asked if all idea of exchange of Chios for the Dodecanese had been abandoned. He

⁽¹⁾ [The text given above is taken from the *Confidential Print*, as the original decypher cannot be traced.]

replied that, Turkey not being in possession of latter, idea was impracticable and question could not be left open indefinitely. He added that Greek Government are ready to consider any reasonable proposal which, while leaving islands to Greece, makes some concession to Turkish sentiment, but that Turkish Government have never put forward definite suggestions.

I suggested that, if issue of decree were decided on, it would be well to inform Turkish Government of intention, explaining that it was not done in provocative spirit and that Greek Government were ready to receive any suggestions.

As long as question remains open it will be source of danger, and I think that it would be of advantage for it to be brought to a head soon.

Greek Government and public opinion are much concerned at report that Turkish Government are pressing for immediate delivery of Dreadnoughts, even if unfinished. (Repeated to Constantinople, Belgrade and Bucharest.)

MINUTE.

The last sentence is true. The Greek Minister told me all about it with most circumstantial details to-day. The two ships will not be complete but they will be in fighting condition though still short of a gun or two and will be handed over to the Turks at the beginning of August.

I shall send to the Admiralty a copy of a record of what M. Gennadius said.

E. G.
24.6.14.

No. 291.

Mr. Erskine to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 28868/13439/14/19.

Tel. (No. 112.)

Athens, June 26, 1914.

My immediately preceding telegram of 24th June.⁽²⁾

Prime Minister told me to-day that decree respecting the islands would probably be issued in a few days, and that, unless Turkey acquiesced in the possession by Greece of the islands assigned her, she would inform Powers that she could not undertake not to fortify them.

He considers that acquisition of American ships ensures peace, and believes that it will give Greece naval superiority, even after delivery of second Turkish battleship.

This belief should avert danger of Greece provoking war, but will undoubtedly render her indisposed to make any concessions over the islands.

(Repeated to Constantinople, Bucharest, and Belgrade.)

⁽¹⁾ [Copies of this telegram were sent on June 29 to the Admiralty; to the Director of Military Operations. The text given above is taken from the *Confidential Print*, as the original decypher cannot be traced.]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

No. 292.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 29887/9137/14/19.

Tel. (No. 390.)

Constantinople, June 29, 1914.

Minister of the Interior, who is back from Smyrna,⁽²⁾ told me he had succeeded in restoring order, but that things had gone very far.

⁽¹⁾ [The text given above is taken from the *Confidential Print*, as the original decypher cannot be traced.]

⁽²⁾ [cp. *supra*, p. 259, No. 281, and note ⁽³⁾]

I enquired to what he attributed apparent change of attitude of Greek Government.

He said that he had been in personal communication when at Smyrna with M. Venizelos, who had sent Dr. Dillon from Athens to discuss whole situation with him.

After returning to Athens, Dr. Dillon had rejoined him at Smyrna and accompanied him here, where he now is.

Mixed commissions for settlement of emigration question and future of islands are under discussion. I hope to see Dr. Dillon to-day.⁽³⁾

(3) [v. immediately succeeding document.]

No. 293.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Constantinople, June 30, 1914.

F.O. 29580/13439/14/19.

D. 8.10 P.M.

Tel. (No. 396.) Very Confidential.

R. 10.15 P.M.

My telegram No. 390 (of June 29).⁽²⁾

Minister of Interior and Dr. Dillon have just left me, and negotiations are proceeding respecting islands on lines of recognition by Turks of Greek sovereignty, a defensive alliance with Greece, with guarantee of each other's territorial possessions, and later on possibly a treaty of extradition.

Minister of the Interior is himself strongly in favour of a solution of this kind. He told me Minister of War and Minister of Marine were also favourable, being strongly opposed to war.

Nevertheless, Minister of Interior's task is a difficult one, as there are chauvinistic forces to deal with who may not be easy to conciliate. It is probable that Dr. Dillon will receive authority very shortly to make a proposal to Greek Prime Minister by which Turkey would retain nominal suzerainty, but if this is not acceptable to Greece it is clear Minister of the Interior would go further.

Principal reason for this change of view is disappearance of Greek elements from coasts opposite the islands.

I am told that nothing is known here of these negotiations, which it is important should be kept secret.

(1) [This telegram was sent to Athens (as No. 96).]

(2) [v. immediately preceding document.]

No. 294.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 30367/13439/14/19.

Constantinople, D. July 5, 1914.

Tel. (No. 407.) Confidential.

R. July 6, 1914.

I saw Minister of the Interior yesterday. He told me that Dillon would leave to-day for Athens with the proposal that islands should become independent under the governorship of one of the King of Greece's sons, Turkey retaining some sort of suzerainty.

I told Minister of the Interior that it was not likely that his proposal would be accepted, and he replied that it was open to Greek Prime Minister to make a counter-

(1) [The text given above is taken from the *Confidential Print*, as the original decypher cannot be traced.]

proposal. I urged Minister of the Interior to meet Greek Prime Minister as soon as possible, and I think that a meeting will be arranged, so soon as a basis of discussion is found, in Switzerland. At Minister of the Interior's suggestion, I saw Grand Vizier this morning. He said that diminution of Greek population on coast of Asia Minor had made a great difference in importance to them of islands, in regard to which they are now ready to go to great lengths in order to avoid war.

He was favourable to a meeting between Minister of the Interior and M. Venizelos. I have put off my departure for another week in case I can be of use, as Minister of the Interior seemed to wish me to remain. Dillon is very hopeful of an arrangement, and is convinced of the sincerity of Minister of the Interior, who, he says, is ready himself to accept any reasonable arrangement, but is having difficulties with more chauvinistic members of the Committee.

I asked Grand Vizier whether Greek churches would soon be reopened. He replied that the Patriarch wished to reopen, but that Greek Minister would not allow him to do so. Dillon tells me that Greek Minister is unfavourable to any arrangement, and would prefer a war, which he thinks inevitable.

(Sent to Athens.)

No. 295.

Mr. Erskine to Sir Edward Grey.

Athens, July 8, 1914.

F.O. 30940/13439/14/19.

D. 6 P.M.

Tel. (No. 116.) Very Confidential.

R. 7.30 P.M.

Constantinople telegrams No. 896⁽¹⁾ of June 30 and No. 407 of July 5.⁽²⁾

Dillon had a long conversation with M. Venizelos yesterday.

He first submitted proposal that present administration of islands, including Samos, should remain unchanged, but that Governor-General should be appointed by King of Greece and Sultan conjointly. This appearing inadequate to M. Venizelos as a basis of negotiations Dillon then suggested that his Excellency might propose that one of King of Greece's sons should be conjointly proclaimed Viceroy. His Excellency enquired whether he could go further and propose that this appointment should be made not by Imperial Iradé and Royal Decree but by terms of treaty itself. Dillon replied that he thought Turkish Government would insist on some symbol of suzerainty for form's sake, such as Imperial Iradé, but that his Excellency might embody suggestion in counter proposal. M. Venizelos also stated that if he and Turkish Minister of the Interior were to meet he would wish latter to be provided with full powers. This Dillon accepted on behalf of Minister of the Interior, provided that basis of negotiations were first explicitly accepted by both.

M. Venizelos will discuss matter with the King and Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Dillon proposes to start for Constantinople to-morrow with reply.

(Repeated to Constantinople.)

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 267, No. 293.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. immediately preceding document.*]

No. 296.

*Mr. Erskine to Sir Edward Grey.**Athens, July 8, 1914.*

F.O. 30942/13439/14/19.

D. 7.30 P.M.

Tel. (No. 118.) Very Confidential.

R. 9.30 P.M.

My telegram No. 116 of to-day.⁽¹⁾

Minister for Foreign Affairs spoke to me this morning on the subject. He said that Greek Government were favourably disposed to Dillon's last proposal, modified as suggested by M. Venizelos, although possibly they might try and get better terms. They attach great importance to proposed treaty as the only means of securing Greek interests in Turkey. Further discussion will take place with the King to-night.

It is important that basis of negotiations and meeting of M. Venizelos and Turkish Minister of the Interior should be arranged as soon as possible. Meetings of Chamber were prudently suspended during crisis, but public is getting restless at continued suspension.

Minister for Foreign Affairs thinks that knowledge that M. Venizelos had gone abroad to meet Minister of the Interior would calm public opinion and enable Government to prolong adjournment during negotiations.

(Repeated to Constantinople.)

⁽¹⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

No. 297.

Mr. Erskine to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 31137/13439/14/19.

Tel. (No. 119.) Confidential.

*Athens, July 9, 1914.*My immediately preceding telegram of 8th July.⁽²⁾

Dillon leaves to-night for Constantinople with draft basis of negotiations approved by the King and M. Venizelos and Minister for Foreign Affairs on lines of joint nomination of King's son as Viceroy by article of treaty. Greek Minister for Foreign Affairs told me to-day that this is utmost Greek Government can concede. They had wished to ask for guarantees for population of Dodecanesos, but have refrained in the hope of expediting a settlement.

When he meets Turkish Minister of the Interior, M. Venizelos will propose clause protecting Greek inhabitants in Turkey. Minister for Foreign Affairs said he would much appreciate support of His Majesty's Government in persuading Turkish Government to accept proposed basis. I replied that I was sure His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople would do all he could.

If Turkey refuses or delays acceptance, whole scheme will be wrecked for reason given in my telegram above referred to, and situation will be worse than before.

(Repeated to Constantinople.)

MINUTES.

I doubt whether it would be politic to instruct Sir L. Mallet to give official support to a Greek demand, which may after all be rejected. Sir L. Mallet has made it quite clear to the

⁽¹⁾ [The text given above is taken from the *Confidential Print*, as the original decypher cannot be traced.]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

Turkish Government that H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] would welcome any amicable arrangement between Turkey and Greece. This should suffice.

E. A. C
July 10.

I agree. We had better remain benevolently passive.

A. N

It has been repeated to Sir L. Mallet and can be left to his discretion.

E. G

No. 298.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 31513/13439/14/19.

Tel. (No. 428.)

Constantinople, July 12, 1914.

My telegram No. 425 of 10th July.⁽²⁾

Minister of the Interior and Dillon lunched with me to-day.

Dillon explained Greek counter-proposal, and said that, in agreeing to joint nomination of one of King's sons as Governor of islands and to similar procedure in the event of change of Governor, M. Venizelos had gone to furthest limit of concession. I said that Greek proposal seemed reasonable and that advantages of understanding with Greece appeared to outweigh any sacrifice of sentiment which acceptance would entail.

Minister of the Interior said that Bulgaria was also offering an alliance, which many people preferred to alliance with Greece. After considerable discussion he said that Council would consider proposal this evening, and that, if acceptable in principle, he could meet M. Venizelos to arrange details.

I will report further to-morrow.⁽³⁾

(Repeated to Athens.)

(1) [The text given above is taken from the *Confidential Print*, as the original decypher cannot be traced.]

(2) [Sir L. Mallet's telegram (No. 425) of July 10, 1914, stated that he had urged the Minister of the Interior to arrange an early meeting with Monsieur Venizelos. (F.O. 31276/13439/14/19.)]

(3) [v. immediately succeeding document.]

No. 299.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 31794/13439/14/19.

Tel. (No. 429.) Very Confidential.

Constantinople, July 13, 1914.

My telegram No. 428 of 12th July.⁽²⁾

Dillon has just left Minister of the Interior. Cabinet have accepted Greek proposal for defensive treaty, including article providing for joint appointment of one of King's sons as Governor of the three islands of Samos, Chios, and Mitylene. Meeting is to be arranged at Brussels between M. Venizelos and Turkish plenipotentiary, who will be Grand Vizier.

(1) [This telegram was sent to Paris (as No. 195); to Berlin (as No. 177); to Rome (as No. 170); to Vienna (as No. 131); to St. Petersburg (as No. 316); "for confidential information." The text given above is taken from the *Confidential Print*, as the original decypher cannot be traced.]

(2) [v. immediately preceding document.]

I doubt whether my colleagues are aware that there is any question of a defensive alliance, although they know that negotiations are proceeding through Dillon about islands.

Since writing above I have seen Grand Vizier, who confirmed Dillon's information, and said that he hoped to meet M. Venizelos very soon.

MINUTE.

Their respective purchases of Dreadnoughts to overawe each other will be money wasted after a defensive Treaty has been made.

When that is signed they had better agree to sell their Dreadnoughts, unless they are ambitious enough to attempt together to control Italy.

E. G.

No. 300.

Mr. Erskine to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 32047/18489/14/19.

Athens, D. July 14, 1914.

Tel. (No. 121.) Confidential.

R. July 15, 1914.

Constantinople telegram No. 429 of 18th July.⁽²⁾

I handed to M. Venizelos this morning message from Dillon informing him that Turkish Government accepted his proposed basis of negotiations. He expressed disappointment that Minister of the Interior was not to be Turkish plenipotentiary and suspicion of the motives of the Turkish Government in designating Grand Vizier, who, he feared, would not have sufficient authority to conclude a definite arrangement. He would like to ask that Minister of the Interior should accompany the Grand Vizier. I pointed out that such a request might be resented as implying want of confidence in Grand Vizier, who, after all, was head of the Government, and would doubtless have full powers. He finally said he would now agree to meet Grand Vizier, but would suggest later that he would appreciate presence of the Minister of the Interior also, which would facilitate discussion of questions of internal character.

Minister for Foreign Affairs has just brought me M. Venizelos's reply to Dillon proposing to start 16th July for meeting on 20th July. He will have full powers to settle all pending questions and to sign treaty of defensive alliance.

Minister for Foreign Affairs complained that incidents had occurred quite recently, such as sinking of boats containing Greek refugees and massacre on an island near Smyrna, any repetition of which would excite public opinion and wreck the negotiations. He would be grateful if His Majesty's Embassy at Constantinople could point this out to Turkish Government.⁽³⁾

(Repeated to Constantinople.)

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Paris (as No. 198); to Berlin (as No. 179); to Rome (as No. 172); to Vienna (as No. 133); to St. Petersburg (as No. 321); "for confidential information." The text given above is taken from the *Confidential Print*, as the original decypher cannot be traced.]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

⁽³⁾ [For Sir Edward Grey's instructions to Mr. Beaumont, v *infra*, p. 274, No. 303.]

No. 301.

*Mr. Beaumont to Sir Edward Grey.**Constantinople, July 15, 1914.*

D. 8.20 P.M.

R. 10 P.M.

F.O. 32161/13439/14/19.

Tel. (No. 434.) Confidential.

Athens telegram of 14th July⁽¹⁾ (received here unnumbered): Negotiations with Greece.

Minister of the Interior is now disposed to raise difficulties and to make joint nomination of Governor basis only of settlement. Dillon has told him that it is useless to ask for further concessions with regard to islands, as conditions which he had communicated were M. Venizelos's last word. Non-acceptance would make war inevitable. Minister of the Interior is consulting Grand Vizier this afternoon, and there will be Cabinet Council to-night when question should be finally decided.

Minister of the Interior says that Grand Vizier wishes to be plenipotentiary, and no change will be made in this respect.

He is sincerely anxious to restore order in Aidin vilayet, and agrees as to necessity for exemplary punishment of the worst offenders.

(Repeated to Athens.)

(¹) [v. immediately preceding document.]

No. 302.

Mr. Erskine to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 33970/13439/14/19.

(No. 192.) Very Confidential.

Athens, D. July 15, 1914.

Sir,

R. July 27, 1914.

As I have already had the honour to report by telegraph,⁽¹⁾ Monsieur Venizelos proposes to start tomorrow for Brussels, where he hopes to meet the Grand Vizier on the 20th instant.

When I conveyed to him Dr. Dillon's message to the effect that the Turkish Government had accepted his proposed basis of negotiation and had appointed the Grand Vizier as their plenipotentiary, he did not disguise his disappointment at this choice. He said he had throughout been in negotiation with Talaat Bey, whom he considered to be by far the most influential man of the Young Turkish party, and he feared that the appointment of the Grand Vizier was an indication that the Turkish Government were not acting in good faith and did not intend the negotiations to lead to a final settlement. He was inclined to ask that Talaat Bey should also proceed to Brussels. I pointed out that the Grand Vizier might well take offence at such a request, which would imply want of confidence in him, that he would doubtless be furnished with full powers to conclude the treaty, and that as he was the nominal head of the Government it would be difficult for the Government subsequently to set aside an arrangement come to by him. I also assured him that, so far as I knew, the decision to accept his proposals had been taken by the whole cabinet and not merely by Talaat Bey—a point on which he seemed doubtful. He finally agreed to meet the Grand Vizier but said he would let it be known later that he would greatly appreciate Talaat's presence also at Brussels as there were many questions of an internal character which he wished to discuss and of which the Minister of the Interior had an intimate knowledge.

At Monsieur Venizelos' request I arranged a meeting at the Legation today between His Excellency and Sir Louis Mallet who was spending a few hours in Athens on his way to England. The latter assured him that, while he could take no respon-

(¹) [v. *supra*, p. 271, No. 300.]

sibility for the opinion and had not discussed the subject with the Grand Vizier himself, he believed that the Turkish Government were in earnest and were sincerely anxious to bring the negotiations to a successful issue.

Both Monsieur Venizelos and Monsieur Streit are greatly pleased with the turn which events have taken and I learn that when the former submitted his proposals to the king, who up to that moment had no knowledge of what was passing, they met with His Majesty's immediate and warm approval.

The advantages of the proposed treaty of alliance to both countries are obvious and, as Monsieur Venizelos observed to me, it is only the realization of the proposal which he made to Turkey shortly before the Balkan war⁽²⁾ in return for a concession on the Cretan question. The real danger to this country is the determination of Bulgaria eventually to get possession of the part of Macedonia from which she was ejected in the late war. I understand that the idea is ultimately to induce Roumania to join Greece and Turkey in a triple alliance, but in the meantime the proposed Greco-Turkish Alliance together with that already existing between Greece and Servia should afford sufficient protection against the designs of Bulgaria. When once Turkey has acquiesced in the possession of the islands by Greece it is difficult to foresee any cause of serious friction between the two countries, and both Monsieur Venizelos and Monsieur Streit are fully alive to the advantage of strengthening Turkey, realizing that Greece has more to lose than to gain by the break-up of the Ottoman Empire.

The greatest credit seems due to Dr. Dillon for the part he has played as intermediary between Monsieur Venizelos and Talaat. So recently as the 26th ultimo, as I reported in my telegram No. 112 of that date,⁽³⁾ Monsieur Venizelos was against all compromise, and in favour of the immediate issue of a Royal Decree annexing the islands. Dr. Dillon, however, who is an old friend of his, succeeded in persuading him to make this last attempt at a friendly settlement which now seems likely to be realized. Rapidity and secrecy were essential to its success and neither could have been obtained by the ordinary channels of negotiation. Dr. Dillon has been indefatigable in his efforts and has made the journey between Athens and Smyrna and Athens and Constantinople, no less than five times within a period of less than three weeks. In spite of the precautions taken, rumours have got about, apparently having their source at Constantinople, that Dr. Dillon is entrusted with a special mission to Talaat Bey from Monsieur Venizelos regarding the Islands. Fortunately nothing is known as to the proposed alliance, the maintenance of secrecy regarding which until the conclusion of the negotiations at Brussels is of great importance.

It is now proposed to issue a statement to the effect that Monsieur Venizelos has gone to Brussels to meet the Grand Vizier in order to discuss the various questions pending between the two Governments.

Monsieur Streit asked me yesterday to express to you his grateful appreciation of the assistance rendered by His Majesty's Government, by means of the unofficial intervention of His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, which had greatly contributed to the success of the negotiations up to their present point.

His Excellency was aware that it was largely thanks to His Majesty's Government that the Islands had been assigned to Greece, and said it was a matter of deep satisfaction to the Greek Government that the arrangement which he hoped would now confirm Greece in their possession would also largely be due to the benevolent attitude of His Majesty's Government.

I have, &c.

WILLIAM ERSKINE.

(2) [*cp. Gooch & Temperley, Vol. IX (II), pp. 703-4, No. 864.*]

(3) [*v. supra, p. 266, No. 291.*]

No. 303.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Beaumont.

F.O. 32047/13489/14/19.

Tel. (No. 311.)

*Foreign Office, July 16, 1914, 1.5 p.m.*Mr. Erskine's tel[egram] No. 121.⁽¹⁾

I must leave it to your judgment whether and if so in what form you should make any communication to Turkish Gov[ernment] in sense suggested by Greek Min[ister] for Foreign Affairs.

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 271, No. 300.]

No. 304.

*Mr. Beaumont to Sir Edward Grey.**Constantinople, July 16, 1914.*

D. 3 p.m.

R. 5.5 p.m.

F.O. 32290/13489/14/19.

Tel. (No. 435.) Confidential.

My telegram No. 434 of 15 July⁽¹⁾: Greek negotiations.

Decision of Council of Ministers last night was unfavourable to the proposals submitted by Dillon. General sense of discussion was that, considering advantage to Greece of alliance, terms offered were inadequate. I tried to get Grand Vizier to say what more was wanted. He talked vaguely of autonomy for islands, presumably under suzerainty of Sultan, which would not of course be acceptable to Greece. To reach an understanding further concessions are absolutely necessary. Perhaps Turkish Minister at Athens, to whom instructions are being telegraphed to-day, might be able to make some more practical suggestion than maintenance of Turkish flag in islands, on which Grand Vizier is inclined to insist.

He is, however, in spite of dangers of present situation, not averse to maintenance of *status quo*, and declares that publication of decree of annexation⁽²⁾ would be received here with calmness, whereas present Cabinet would never survive conclusion of an alliance from which nothing was gained but right of Sultan to have a voice in appointment of Governor-General of islands.

(Repeated to Athens.)

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 272, No. 301.]⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 266, No. 291.]

No. 305.

*Mr. Erskine to Sir Edward Grey.**Athens, July 17, 1914.*

D. 12.40 p.m.

R. 3.30 p.m.

F.O. 32455/13489/14/19.

Tel. (No. 123.) Confidential.

Turkey and Greece.

Constantinople tel[egram] No. 435 of 16 July.⁽¹⁾

M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] brought me last night long and rather hysterical tel[egram] M. Venizelos had received from Dillon, gist of which was that, having demanded and failed to receive immediate communication of final decision of

⁽¹⁾ [*v. immediately preceding document.*]

Cabinet, he had broken off negotiations and was coming here. M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] regrets Dillon's action, which was quite unauthorized.

I informed H[is] E[xc]ellency of decision of Turkish Cabinet Council and said that it appeared essential for Greece to make some further concession. I made personal suggestion that precedent of Italian arrangement regarding Tripoli might be followed, or solution might be found on basis of lease as in case of Kiao-Chow. H[is] E[xc]ellency, who is still hopeful, seems ready to make some further concession and will discuss question with M. Venizelos to-day. Negotiations however will be much more difficult now as proposed meeting at Brussels has been announced and whole question is being fully discussed in press, owing, I believe, to indiscretions of Turkish Minister.

(Repeated to Constantinople.)

No. 306.

Mr. Erskine to Sir Edward Grey.

Athens, July 18, 1914.

F.O. 32577/13439/14/19.

D. 10.45 A.M.

Tel. (No. 124.) Confidential.

R. 11.45 A.M.

My immediately preceding tel[egram] of 17 July.⁽¹⁾

M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] told me last night that Turkish Gov[ernment]t show signs of again changing their mind. Turkish Minister had informed M. Venizelos that hesitation of Grand Vizier to negotiate on proposed bases was due to fear that M. Venizelos wished to exclude all discussion of details at Brussels, and that but for this he would be prepared to meet him.

M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] showed me instructions he was sending to Greek Minister at Constantinople to reply that it had never been intended to exclude such discussion, and that, provided that it were clearly understood that "details" did not include proposals recently put forward to and rejected by Dillon for stationing Turkish troops in islands and retention of customs by Turkey, M. Venizelos would start for Brussels on Monday.

M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] tells me in confidence that he sees possible connection between return of German Ambassador to Constantinople Wednesday morning and adverse decision of the Council of Ministers the same evening.

(Repeated to Constantinople.)

⁽¹⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

No. 307.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir H. Rumbold.

F.O. 33461/13439/14/19.

(No. 240.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 20, 1914.

The German Ambassador informed me to-day that Turkey and Greece had come to an Agreement between themselves about the Ægean Islands, and that it went so far as to include a defensive alliance. He said that he supposed I had the same information.⁽¹⁾

⁽¹⁾ [cp. *supra*, pp. 272-3, No. 302.]

I said that I knew they had been discussing such an Agreement, but I had understood that there were difficulties in Constantinople and that the Agreement had not been concluded.

The Ambassador, after referring to a paper he had brought with him, said that they were agreed in principle.

I said that, according to my information, I thought it might be said that they were agreed in principle, but the completion of an Agreement was subject to the discussion of details between the Grand Vizier and M. Venizelos, and I had not heard that an Agreement was so assured as the German Ambassador had told me.

I said that the initiation of the negotiations and the basis of them were, so far as I knew, entirely due to Turkey and Greece themselves and not to any outside suggestion, and we naturally hoped very much that Greece and Turkey would come to an Agreement, for the danger of war, between them had a little time ago been a cause of great anxiety.

I said that I supposed that the German Government were equally desirous of seeing an Agreement.

The Ambassador cordially asserted that this was the view of the German Government.

[I am, &c.]
E. G[REY].

No. 308.

Mr. Beaumont to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 33301/13439/14/19.

Tel. (No. 450.)

Constantinople, July 22, 1914.

Athens telegram No. 124 of 18th July⁽²⁾: Turkey and Greece.

Grand Vizier will leave on Monday at latest to meet M. Venizelos. Recent practically unanimous vote of confidence in the Government should strengthen his hand in urging complete change of policy, as to effect of which he appears a little anxious. Provided further concessions can be obtained from Greece he is sanguine of results. There is no question any longer of regaining possession of islands, to the loss of which Turkish Government appear to be reconciled, provided some formula can be devised for the sake of appearances.

(Repeated to Athens.)

⁽¹⁾ [The text given above is taken from the *Confidential Print*, as the original decypher cannot be traced.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 275, No. 306.]

No. 309.

Mr. Erskine to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 38889/13439/14/19.

(No. 200.) Confidential.

Sir,

Athens, D. July 25, 1914.

R. August 14, 1914.

When I wrote my despatch No. 192 of the 15th instant⁽¹⁾ there seemed good prospects of a successful issue to the negotiations between this country and Turkey respecting the islands and the proposed treaty of alliance. The Ottoman Government had agreed to the bases of negotiations proposed by M. Venizelos, and he was on the point of starting for Brussels in order to meet the Grand Vizier.

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 272-3, No. 302.]

The same afternoon however Dr. Dillon telegraphed that Talaat Bey appeared to have changed his mind and had suggested as further conditions that Turkey should be allowed to maintain an armed force in Mitylene and Chios and to retain the customs. These proposals he had rejected. He appears at the same time to have delivered a kind of ultimatum, threatening to break off negotiations unless the decision of the Cabinet Council to be held that evening were favourable and were communicated to him before midnight.

The following evening Monsieur Streit brought me a long and rather incoherent telegram which had just been received from Dr. Dillon, stating that, not having received any communication as to the result of the Council, he considered his mission at an end and was leaving Constantinople at once. He believed that the Ottoman Government were merely trying to gain time and intended shortly to renew the policy of expelling the Greeks from Asia Minor.

Monsieur Streit expressed considerable annoyance at Dr. Dillon's precipitate action, which was quite unauthorized and which showed that his vexation at the apparent failure of his mediation had seriously affected his judgment.

Having just received Mr. Beaumont's telegram No. 435 of the 16th instant⁽²⁾ I was able to inform His Excellency of the adverse decision of the Cabinet Council, adding that as the Ottoman Government felt that they were giving too much and receiving too little it was clearly essential for the Greek Government to make some further concession. Monsieur Streit, though disappointed at the check which the negotiations had received, did not seem surprised or unduly dejected. He was fully aware of the difficult position in which the Turkish Ministers were placed owing to the pressure exercised by the more extreme faction of the Committee who were hostile to a policy of conciliation. It might be possible for Greece to make some further concession, but it was for Turkey to propose a formula.

In this connection Monsieur Streit informed me that during the past six months no fewer than four separate attempts at mediation had been made by Roumania, but all had fallen through because, although Greece had let it be known that she was quite prepared to admit some form of suzerainty, Turkey had failed to submit a single definite proposal based on this principle. Yet another attempt at mediation had been made by the German Emperor during his stay at Corfu.⁽³⁾ Monsieur Venizelos and Monsieur Streit had conversations with His Majesty and with the German Chancellor who stated that they had every reason to believe that Turkey was prepared to make a reasonable proposal on the basis of Turkish suzerainty. When this proposal eventually reached the Greek Government it proved to be to the effect that the administration of the Islands should be as before the war and under Turkish sovereignty. If Monsieur Streit's statement is correct it must be admitted that the Greek Government have shown both courage and optimism in again attempting to negotiate a compromise.

After Dr. Dillon's departure from Constantinople, negotiations were continued through the Turkish Minister here and the Greek Minister at Constantinople, with the result already reported by telegraph that Monsieur Venizelos left Athens on the 21st instant,⁽⁴⁾ proposing to wait in the neighbourhood of Munich until the Grand Vizier had actually started for Brussels.

I gather that in view of the vacillating attitude of the Ottoman Government and of the evident reluctance of the Grand Vizier to fix the date of his departure, Monsieur Venizelos is less sanguine now than he was recently as to the result of the meeting, assuming that it takes place.

His principal reason for starting at once without waiting for the Grand Vizier seems to have been his desire to show that the Greek Government on their side had done everything possible to bring about a peaceful settlement.

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 274, No. 304.]

⁽³⁾ [cp. *supra*, pp. 251-2, No. 272.]

⁽⁴⁾ [Mr. Erskine's telegram (No. 126) of July 21, 1914, is not reproduced as the contents are sufficiently indicated above. (F.O. 33169/13439/14/19.)]

His need of a holiday and the good excuse afforded by his absence for the continued adjournment of the Chamber have also no doubt influenced his decision.

I have, &c.

WILLIAM ERSKINE.

MINUTE

This shows that even if the war had not intervened, there was little chance of the Dillon negotiation leading to a satisfactory issue.

E A C

Aug[ust] 15.

A. N.

CHAPTER LXXXVI.

GENERAL BALKAN POLITICS, 1913-14.

[*ED NOTE*.—In connection with the documents printed below attention is called to certain texts of treaties published in *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II) Appendix I of that volume contains the text of the Russo-Bulgar Convention of 1902 (pp. 1005-6), to which reference is made *infra*, pp. 295-6, No. 327. The Serbo-Greek Alliance of June 1, 1913, and the Military Convention which accompanied it are printed *ibid.*, pp. 1020-6, *App. II*; for these *cp. infra*, pp. 299-300, No. 333.

Rumours of a secret agreement between Rumania, Greece, Servia, and Montenegro to guarantee the execution of the Treaty of Bucharest were already current in August 1913, when Mr. C Barclay reported them (*v. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II), p. 986, No. 1240), and they were known to Mr. Crackanthorpe a month later (*v. ibid.*, p. 1001, No. 1257). Later information from Mr. Crackanthorpe is given *infra*, p. 303, No. 339. It has, however, proved impossible to trace any text for this agreement. Similarly reports were made early in 1914 of the conclusion of two Military Conventions, one between Servia and Rumania said to have been dated November 5, 1913 (*cp. infra*, p. 306, No. 344), and the other between Greece and Rumania, the date of which is given as January 16, 1914 (*cp. infra*, p. 300, No. 335). In neither case has any text been traced. Reports of the conclusion of a Turco-Bulgarian Military Convention were made and denied in January 1914. (*v. infra*, pp. 296-7, Nos 328-9) Count Pallavicini had telegraphed from Constantinople on December 22, 1913, that the convention would be signed that day or the next. *v. O.-U.A.*, VII, p. 674, No. 9116. On the 29th he reported that the signature was deferred. *v. ibid.*, pp. 682-4, No. 9131. *cp.* also Count Tarnowski's report of January 27, 1914, *ibid.*, pp. 786-8, No. 9252. The text under date January 12/25, 1914, is given in *Imperialismus*, 1st Ser., Vol. I, pp. 449-50, *App*]

No. 310.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 45295/45295/13/38.

(No. 288.)

St. Petersburg, D. October 1, 1913.

Sir,

R. October 6, 1913.

I am informed that there has been no abatement as yet in the displeasure shown by the Emperor and the Russian Government towards the King of Montenegro since the latter disregarded the Emperor's injunctions and advice on the occasion of the Scutari crisis of last spring.⁽²⁾ Russian dissatisfaction has taken the form, which touches King Nicolas very closely, of a cessation of the supplies which used to flow more or less regularly, in different shapes, from St. Petersburg to Cetinje. I am told that imploring letters have been received at St. Petersburg from King Nicolas, but so far without avail. In this connection it is announced that a Russian-supported institution in the Montenegrin capital for the education of girls of Slavonic origin is now to be transferred to Servia. The initiative in that matter was however taken by the Montenegrin Government who notified in April last that they intended to found another institution "more in accord with the needs on [*sic*: of] the country."

The attitude adopted by the Emperor towards King Nicolas corresponds with that which His Imperial Majesty has assumed towards Bulgaria. I am informed that the Emperor adheres strictly to the point of view defined in his telegram to the Balkan Sovereigns on the eve of the second Balkan war;—that the side which commenced hostilities would forfeit the sympathy of Russia and must suffer the consequences for it.⁽³⁾ This is undoubtedly a convenient attitude, which, while soothing to Russia's sense of dignity, relieves her of the necessity of showing over-much energy in championing her former protégés.

I have, &c.

HUGH O'BEIRNE.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Prime Minister.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II), pp. 1122-4, SUBJECT INDEX, sub ALBANIA, *Frontiers: Montenegro and Scutari*.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. ibid.*, pp. 847-8, No. 1055, *encl.*]

No. 311.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 48933/48933/13/44.

(No. 197.)

Belgrade, D. October 23, 1913.

R. October 28, 1913.

Sir,

I have the honour to report that the German and Austrian representatives here, acting on instructions from their Governments, supported at the Servian Ministry for Foreign Affairs on the 11th instant the demand of the Oriental Railway Company for the definite settlement of the questions arising from the administration and exploitation of the line by Servian Military Authorities in the annexed territories from the date of the first Balkan war.

Monsieur Pashitch replied that negotiations on this question were already on foot when the recent Albanian trouble arose entailing remobilization and further dislocation of the railway service. As soon as conditions again became normal an endeavour would be made to regularize the situation by placing the Oriental line on a footing of absolute equality with the Servian lines. Should this prove impracticable, the Servian Government had decided to buy out the shares of the Oriental Railway Company.

The attitude of the Servian Government in this question gives an indication of its strong desire to emancipate itself, at whatever pecuniary sacrifice, from the influence which it feels Austria would be in a position to exercise over the economic development of the country were the shares of the Oriental Railway Company to continue to remain in the hands of Austrian banks.

I have, &c.

DAYRELL CRACKANTHORPE.

No. 312.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Mr. Russell.*Private.⁽¹⁾

My dear Russell:—

Foreign Office, November 10, 1913.

I wonder if you will be able to ascertain what has passed between King Ferdinand and the Austrian Emperor and Berchtold?⁽²⁾ He seems to have had prolonged conversations with both those personages, and it would be of real interest to know what has passed. It seems to me that he has given up all hope of any support or sympathy from St. Petersburg and that he has now thrown himself wholeheartedly into Austrian arms. Austria's whole attitude in regard to Albanian affairs is by no means satisfactory and we were not at all pleased at the separate action taken by Austria and Italy at Athens without any previous consultation with the other Powers.⁽³⁾ I personally have my doubts as to whether it will be possible to continue for very long co-operation with Austria in Albanian matters unless she becomes more reasonable. We have no intention of rushing matters and would take no steps except after most careful consideration.

This is only a little line by the Bag as I am very busy this morning. I shall meet at Windsor at the end of next week the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, but I do not suppose I shall have much opportunity of any serious conversation with him.

[Yours &c.,

A. NICOLSON.]

⁽¹⁾ [Carnock MSS., Vol. X of 1913.]⁽²⁾ [*cp. infra*, pp. 283-4, No. 316.]⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 108-11, Nos. 123-4, and notes]

No. 313.

Sir F. Elliot to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 58169/38220/13/44.

(No. 266.)

Sir,

Athens, D. November 17, 1913.

R. November 24, 1913.

The Treaty of Peace between Greece and Turkey was signed at 2.30 A.M. on the 14th instant.⁽¹⁾ A translation was published on the same day in a morning paper, but it was incomplete, and Monsieur Panas, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, told me he could not let me have the full treaty with the annexed protocols until it had been submitted to the Chamber, which he expected would be done on the 19th instant. I shall await the official publication before transmitting the text of the treaty to you, but I may state that it contains an article by which the High Contracting Parties undertake to maintain, so far as concerns them, the provisions of the Treaty of London of the 30th of May 1913, including the stipulations of Article 13 of that Treaty (which leaves the fate of the Aegean Islands to the decision of the Great Powers).

If the instructions to the Ottoman Plenipotentiaries had not arrived when they did, or at most a few hours later, the Greek Government would have broken off the negotiations. Circulars to the Greek representatives abroad were lying ready for signature on the Minister's table, and the Greek fleet had been ordered to be ready for sea within 24 hours.

The news of the signature of the treaty was the signal for general rejoicings. Although there has been some grumbling in the opposition press, and there will be no doubt in the Chamber, that victorious Greece has accepted terms little different from those imposed upon defeated Bulgaria, yet the general feeling is undoubtedly that anything is better than a prolongation of the state of suspense, and that it was high time for everyone to return to his daily avocations.

Ghalib Bey left on the 15th instant for Constantinople with the Treaty and expects to return here next week with the ratifications, which have to be exchanged within a fortnight of the signature.⁽²⁾ It is recognised here that his personal attitude has throughout been conciliatory and has gone far to enable a settlement to be arrived at.

I have, &c.

F. ELLIOT.

MINUTE.

I wonder if Crete was handed over. We must wait for the text.⁽³⁾

A. N.

⁽¹⁾ [For the text of the treaty, *v. B.F.S.P.*, Vol. 107, pp. 893-902.]⁽²⁾ [Ratifications were exchanged at Athens on November 29, 1913. *B.F.S.P.*, Vol. 107, p. 893.]⁽³⁾ [*v. infra*, pp. 287-8, *Ed. note.*]

No. 314.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 58085/38220/13/44.

(No. 941.)

Sir,

Constantinople, D. November 18, 1913.

R. November 24, 1913.

His Majesty's Minister at Athens has doubtless reported to you in detail the conclusion at Athens on Nov[ember] 15 of the Turco-Greek peace negotiations, due in

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King]

great part to the mediation of Monsieur Take Jonesco the Roumanian Minister of the Interior.

In the beginning of the month the negotiations threatened to come to a deadlock and the press here began to adopt a menacing tone towards Greece when the arrival at Constantinople of Monsieur Take Jonesco seemed completely to alter the situation. The Ottoman Government had probably been hoping to separate Serbia from Greece and to secure the neutrality of Roumania in the event of a rupture with Greece leading to a resumption of hostilities, with that country, but that the Roumanian Minister of the Interior, in an interview he had with Talaat Bey on board the Roumanian steamer carrying Monsieur Take Jonesco to Athens, clearly intimated that Roumania would not remain a spectator of events likely further to upset the basis of the Balcan equilibrium established by the Treaty of Bucarest.⁽²⁾ This coupled with the financial argument, seems to have decided the Turkish Government somewhat reluctantly to agree to the signature of peace with Greece, leaving the solution of the Ægean islands question to the Powers.

During the two days spent here on his return journey, Monsieur Take Jonesco emphasized in a press interview the moral obligation of Roumania to ensure respect for the Treaty of Bucarest, and though he was fêted by the Turkish Government, there would seem reason to suppose that this attitude and the interposition of Roumania has not been cordially welcomed by the Salonican and Macedonian elements in the committee. The latter have not given up hope that circumstances arising out of the islands question may afford an opportunity in conjunction with Bulgaria to alter the present status in Salonica and its Macedonian hinterland. In such circumstances it is more than doubtful if the intervention of Roumania, were she disposed to exercise her influence a second time, would prove efficacious.

Now that peace has been signed with Greece, the Ottoman Government has begun seriously to negotiate with the Servian delegate who arrived here in July last and it is anticipated that the negotiations will be rapidly concluded on the basis of the Turco-Greek and Turco-Bulgarian treaties. It would seem in fact a matter of copying the main provisions of the Treaties.

I have, &c.

LOUIS MALLET.

⁽²⁾ [*v. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II), pp 1141-4, SUBJECT INDEX, *sub* BALKAN WAR, THIRD, *Peace Conference at Bucharest*. For the text of the Treaty, *v. B.F.S.P.*, Vol. 107, pp. 658-70.]

No. 315.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 55229/52178/13/44.

(No. 120.) Confidential.

Sir,

Bucharest, D. November 21, 1913.

R. December 8, 1913.

I saw M. Take Jonesco this morning on his return from his visit to Athens. He told me that at the interview which he had with Talaat Bey, when passing through Constantinople, on his way to Athens, Talaat Bey had asked him whether there was any alliance between Roumania, Serbia and Greece, and that he had replied that there was not, but that Roumania was morally bound to see that the Treaty of Bucharest was not upset and that she was strong enough to meet that obligation if necessary. Talaat Bey had handed him a memorandum stating what Turkey was claiming in the negotiations at Athens, and this had opened the way to his mediation at Athens. M. Take Jonesco spoke most highly of M. Venizelos's statesmanship and moderation

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King.]

and told me that Greece had gone more than half way in the mutual concessions which enabled the two Powers to come to terms.

M. Take Jonesco seemed much pleased with the reception accorded to him at Athens, where he said that he had been received with honours usually reserved for Royalty. I hear, however, from friends of his that he is a good deal piqued by the lukewarm fashion in which his success at Athens has been greeted by his Conservative Colleagues in the Cabinet—so much so that he at one time seriously contemplated severing the connexion of his party with the Conservatives and breaking up the present coalition Cabinet, a course from which, I believe, he has for the moment been dissuaded by the King.

I have, &c.

G. BARCLAY.

No. 316.

Mr. Russell to Sir A. Nicolson.⁽¹⁾

Private.⁽²⁾

Dear Sir Arthur,

Vienna, November 21, 1913.

I was very grateful for your letter of the 10th,⁽³⁾ which reached me by the last messenger. I had already been doing my utmost to ascertain if anything of importance had been transacted in the interviews between King Ferdinand and the Emperor and Count Berchtold and telegraphed⁽⁴⁾ then after the receipt of your letter that it was fairly positive that no sort of arrangement had been come to between Austria-Hungary and Bulgaria.

With regard to what you say regarding Austria's unsatisfactory attitude in Albanian affairs and the possibility of withdrawing our assistance if she is not more reasonable, I hope you won't mind if I make one or two remarks during a brief period of responsibility between the departure of one Ambassador and the arrival of another.

I have been here during the Aehrenthal Régime which I learnt to mistrust, and I now have had ample time to study the Berchtold Régime which to my mind is absolutely above suspicion. Count Berchtold has perhaps no political sense, and certainly no liking for office, but I think he has proved himself on every occasion during the long collaboration of the Powers as a friend of England and an ardent admirer of Sir Edward's impartial policy. His own policy since he succeeded Count Aehrenthal has been moderate beyond anything Europe had ever expected and all the stories that were circulated as to Austrian designs on Balkan territory have been proved to be absolutely untrue.

That the Austrian Government are unbusinesslike, weak and vacillating no one knows better than I do, but in all contentious matters that arise between our two countries they are always prevented by more powerful agencies from meeting our wishes. Take the case of the Canadian Pacific. I have made daily representations at the Ballplatz and it is only too apparent that inability to yield to all our demands is due entirely to the grip that German influence has in this country.

Germany (it is only too clear here) hates our friendship with Austria-Hungary, and France and Russia are always inciting us to find fault with her, and take care to keep in the background themselves. This has been very noticeable of late. Would it not be a pity to give these three and especially the former the satisfaction of seeing us break with Austria-Hungary over Albania which is of no great importance to ourselves and is of vital importance to the Dual Monarchy?

⁽¹⁾ [This letter is endorsed in Sir Edward Grey's hand as having been sent to the King to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe; to Lord Morley]

⁽²⁾ [Carnock MSS., Vol. X of 1913.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 280, No. 312.]

⁽⁴⁾ [Mr. Russell's telegram is not reproduced as it cannot be traced.]

An Austrian Newspaper Editor recently made a tour in Italy and returned to Vienna simply amazed at the wave of Imperialism which is sweeping over that country. He had an interview in Rome with the Prime Minister and the Minister for Foreign Affairs. The former shrugged his shoulders when discussing the Island question and said that it would be impossible to resist the will of the people. As to the Marquis San Giuliano he seemed like one intoxicated with the fumes of Imperialism! He talked of Italian aspirations which seemed to know no limits, for his remarks embraced the Aegean islands, Albania, and even Tunis, and he gave vent to his irredentism by uttering the words 'Trentina' and 'Savoy.'

In connection with this I should like to tell you of another incident which made an impression on me. An Italian Diplomatist well behind the scenes in the Ballplatz and the Consulta, in the course of conversation with regard to future developments in Europe, inadvertently let drop the assertion that Italy would never under any circumstances hold Trieste, which could only be a free port such as Hamburg. What does this mean? To my mind only one thing!

Germany doubtless has an arrangement with Italy behind the back of Austria-Hungary by which some day when things go to pieces here, Trieste with its German-speaking Hinterland will fall to Germany. That is, I trust, in the far distance, but I should not be surprised if there were not a promise of co-operation in the near future by which the Italian Mediterranean policy will receive German support in return for some tangible advantage—possibly a coaling station in the Aegean. With these two Powers our interests will clash; with those of Austria-Hungary never! I cannot help wondering, therefore, if, in these circumstances, it would not be wise to disregard as much as possible Austrian dilatoriness in Albania and Russian and French tales as to her ulterior designs, so that when we are face to face with an Italo-German fait accompli evoking our antagonism at some future date we shall retain at least one friend in the ranks of the Triple Alliance.

Yours sincerely,
THEO RUSSELL.

MINUTE.

An interesting letter. Since Count Berchtold returned to Vienna after his holiday the friction about Albania which arose from Austrian agents there has practically ceased.

But Austria will be of little use to us as a friend, if she falls to pieces. One cannot steer with confidence by a star that may dissolve.

E G

No. 317.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 55189/55189/13/44.

(No. 968.) Confidential.

Sir:—

Pera, D. November 30, 1913.

R. December 8, 1913.

The Bulgarian Minister, Monsieur Tocheff, has, on two occasions, when we have met since his arrival spoken to me very freely and at some length in regard to the present situation and future prospects of his country.

He does not conceal his opinion which he says is shared by everyone in Bulgaria that the settlement arrived at under the Treaty of Bucharest is of only a temporary nature and that the condition of the Macedonian provinces will be just as disturbed, as under the Turkish rule, until a rearrangement has been effected in favour of Bulgaria.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

I asked him to show me on the map what sort of revision would satisfy Bulgaria and be likely to ensure peace in the Balkans, and he drew a rough line which starting at Patarica on the Bulgarian frontier and including Egri Palanka Koprulu in Bulgaria reaches the Albanian frontier just to the north of Ochrida.

The Greek frontier would be pushed further south and Salonica would be declared autonomous with a hinterland starting at Rendina in the Gulf of Orfani and describing a semi-circle which would almost touch the 41st degree of latitude and curving in a southerly direction reach the Gulf of Salonica again at latitude 40. Monsieur Tocheff added that the Bulgarians would be prepared to restore to Turkey a large portion of western Thrace including Gumuldjina—of which he professed to make no account. I asked him by what means Roumania would be induced to accept a readjustment so favourable to Bulgaria of the territorial status quo. He replied that the inducement which Bulgaria could offer and which would amply satisfy the Roumanian Government would be a solemn guarantee on the part of the Bulgarian Government that Roumania would be left in undisturbed possession of the territory recently ceded to her.

As to Servia, she was in a very difficult position. She was in reality considerably weakened by the large accession of territory which she had gained. It was quite beyond her powers to hold and administrate new provinces and, she was going the wrong way to work. There were many people in Servia who fully realized that this task was impossible and would be only too glad to come to terms with Bulgaria on the basis of territorial readjustment. In present circumstances her position placed as she was between two fires was a very dangerous one. Monsieur Tocheff thought that, in these circumstances it was not at all impossible that a peaceful solution might be found by an agreement between Servia and Bulgaria. Monsieur Tocheff was speaking in confidence and the views which he expressed were personal but his remarks show to a certain extent in what direction Bulgarian policy is tending although he did not mean to imply that Bulgarian ambition was likely to be gratified immediately. In discussing with me, on another occasion, the question of the Greek islands, now in the possession of Greece, Monsieur Tocheff expressed his anxiety lest hostilities should be resumed in the spring between Turkey and Greece unless a settlement acceptable to Turkey were arrived at as an early outbreak of war would not suit Bulgaria who would not be ready for another three or four years.

I have, &c.

LOUIS MALLET.

No. 318.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 55162/48933/13/39.

(No. 234.) Confidential.

Sir,

Belgrade, D. December 2, 1913.

R. December 8, 1913.

In my despatch No. 197 of October 23rd⁽²⁾ I had the honour to report upon the attitude of the Servian Government in regard to the question of the Oriental Railway Company in the new territories and of its desire to acquire control of the shares now in the hands of Austrian Banks.

I have today been informed that the Oriental Railway Company has addressed a request to the Servian Government for the speedy settlement of the question at issue, failing which it will be obliged to place its interests in the hands of the Austrian Government.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch was sent to Vienna.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 280, No. 311.]

The Servian Minister at Vienna, Monsieur Yovanovitch, arrived in Belgrade a few days ago and I understand the main object of his visit here is to obtain instructions upon various commercial and economic questions outstanding with Austria. Among these questions that of the Oriental Railway Company stands out prominently and it is feared it may shortly reach an acute stage. I have received private information that Monsieur Yovanovitch's instructions will be to insist at Vienna on four points :—

1. Servian to be the official language used on the line;
2. The use of the line for purposes of mobilization;
3. The right of the Servian Government to regulate freight and passenger rates;
4. An option to buy out the shares of the line.

I am further informed that sooner than allow Austria to retain exclusive control of the Railway to the Ægean, the Servian Government will construct a parallel line hoping thereby to ruin the Austrian line.

The attitude of the Servian Government upon this question is at present very uncompromising. On the other hand the Austrian Minister told me that at his farewell interview with Monsieur Pashitch, the latter assured him of his desire to come to a satisfactory understanding with Austria on commercial questions. Monsieur Pashitch's assurances however have not of late proved very reliable, and just now there is a very strong movement here in favour of cultivating closer economic relations with Germany, and of favouring the placing of orders in the latter country to the prejudice of Austria, and even of France. The French Chargé d'Affaires tells me he is having considerable trouble at the Ministry in regard to the placing of orders with Creusot upon which I understand the issue of the loan to Servia is made partly conditional. The Servian Government does not wish to tie its hands and would like to be free to place orders with Krupp especially in return for a loan from German Banks. My French colleague tells me however that the Servian Government cannot expect to have its bread buttered on both sides.

I have, &c.

DAYRELL CRACKANTHORPE.

P.S.—I have subsequently been informed that secret orders have been issued to the various Ministries concerned to discriminate in favour of Germany as far as possible in the placing of orders. This appears to be specially directed against Austria, whose products have been discriminated against and deprived of free competition in Servia since the commencement of the Balkan War. The abolition of these restrictions is stated to have formed one of the subjects of conversation between Count Berchtold and Monsieur Pashitch at Vienna, as reported in my despatch No. 177 Confidential of October 18th.⁽³⁾

D. C.

⁽³⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 28–9, No. 34. The date of the despatch was October 8, 1913.]

No. 319.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 56386/55450/13/44.

(No. 996.) Confidential.

Sir,

Constantinople, D. December 9, 1913.

R. December 15, 1913.

I have the honour to report that I learn on good authority that at the meeting that was arranged between Monsieur Gennadief and Talaat Bey on the Bulgarian

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King.]

Frontier on the occasion of the Grand Vizier's recent journey to Adrianople, the Bulgarian Minister broached the subject of an offensive and defensive alliance between Turkey and Bulgaria. The Ottoman Minister of the Interior is said to have replied that while eager to put the relations between the two countries on a really solid basis Turkey could not give any definite direction to her foreign policy until after the result of the financial Conference to meet in Paris.

I have, &c.

LOUIS MALLET.

No. 320.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 55953/55953/13/39.

(No. 249.)

Sir :—

Belgrade, D. December 9, 1913.

R. December 12, 1913.

In my despatch No. 234 Confidential, of the 2nd instant⁽¹⁾ I had the honour to report the existence of a very strong movement in Servia in favour of cultivating closer economic relations with Germany, and the desire of the Servian Government to place orders with Krupp in return for a loan from German Banks. I now learn that active negotiations have in fact been taking place between the Servian Government and the Deutsche Bank as the result of which the Servian Government has recently obtained from this Bank a loan of 100 million francs payable in four instalments. In return, the Servian Government has, I am told, (1) placed orders with Krupp for large quantities of ammunition mainly for the Turkish rifles and guns captured during the recent war; (2) ordered boats for the Servian Danube Navigation Company from German firms; (3) contracted for the purchase of oil from the Stearna Romana which is a concern of the Deutsche Bank.

The new policy of the Servian Government consists, as I indicated in my above mentioned despatch, in a Commercial preference to be given to Germany, with a view to strengthening German interests in this country. It is hoped to utilise this as a lever for the purpose of bringing German influence to bear on Austria for a favourable settlement of the various political and economic questions at issue. I have reason to believe the Roumanian Government is taking an active part in the development of Serbo-German commercial relations.

I have, &c.

DAYRELL CRACKANTHORPE.

MINUTE.

This is interesting. Servia's endeavours to make up to Germany are a further indication of Russia's loss of prestige at Belgrade. I wonder if Servia realises what the effect of making up to Germany will be in France where most of the money is.

R. G. V.

Dec[ember] 12

E. A. C.

Dec[ember] 12.

A. N.

(¹) [*v. supra*, pp. 235-6, No. 318.]

[*ED. NOTE*.—On December 10, 1913, Sir F. Elliot telegraphed from Athens (No. 206), D. 8 P.M., R. 11 P.M., that an official communication had been made to him of the Treaties of

Bucharest, Athens, and London. The communication continued as follows (F.O. 55770/43420/13/19):—

“With exception of northern frontier of Epirus and of islands of Ægean Sea, these acts determine the new territories of the Kingdom of Greece, in which, in virtue of the above-mentioned treaties and of arrangement concluded at Belgrade on 3rd August, 1913, the island of Crete is also included.”

Two months earlier, on September 12, 1913, Mr. Crackanthorpe had transmitted a translation of the Decree of Annexation issued by King Peter of Serbia on September 12. (Despatch (No. 163), D. September 12, R. September 15, 1913. F.O. 42191/31950/13/44.) *cp. infra*, pp. 292-3, *Ed. note.*]

No. 321.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 56344/54239/13/7.

(No. 379.)

Sir:—

St. Petersburg, D. December 11, 1913.

R. December 15, 1913.

If the Bulgarian Elections result, as seems probable, in the present Bulgarian Government remaining in office, there can be little doubt that relations between Bulgaria and this country will be exceedingly difficult for some time to come. It need hardly be said that the statesmen now in power at Sofia are obnoxious to Russia, and there are no bounds to the violence with which they have been attacked lately by the Russian Press. I can perhaps best exemplify this by saying that the Bulgarian Minister for Foreign Affairs has been reminded almost daily that in view of his former malpractices his proper place is the felon's dock. King Ferdinand himself has not been forgiven for his reply to the Emperor's telegram summoning him to submit to the arbitration of Russia and the disposition which the King has recently shown, or is thought here to have shown, to place his fortunes entirely under Austrian protection has of course tended to widen the breach between him and the Russian Court. Although I have no grounds for stating that Russian diplomacy will work towards dethroning the King, it is difficult to see how relations of a friendly and confidential character are to be restored between him and St. Petersburg, and his fall would probably be seen here without regret. It is also safe to suppose that Russia will seek to make things difficult for the present Bulgarian Government by using financial pressure on them through France and by other means at her disposal.

In Russia it is always remembered that the Bulgarian Kingdom owes its existence to Russian arms and Russians are keenly sensitive to the reproaches which are levelled at them by Russophobe organs in Sofia to the effect that Russia supported Serbia in her dispute with Bulgaria, and that she did nothing to restrain if she did not positively encourage the Roumanian advance which led to Bulgaria's final humiliation. These reproaches are none the less felt here that they are realised to have a certain foundation in fact. The Russian Press, semi-official and unofficial, has however defended itself vigorously and the “*Rossia*” in an article which was summarised in my despatch No. 370 of the 3rd instant,⁽¹⁾ remarked that notwithstanding this campaign of slander and misrepresentation Russia knew how to distinguish between the real sentiments of the Bulgarian people and the utterances of those who were for the moment at the head of Bulgarian affairs. That observation, I think, fairly sums up the general attitude of Russia towards the Bulgarian nation in the present crisis in Russo-Bulgarian relations. It is felt that in view of the historic events of 1877-8 Bulgaria cannot permanently remain estranged from the nation to

⁽¹⁾ [Mr. O'Beirne's despatch (No. 370), D. December 3, R. December 6, 1913, contained a summary of an article in the *Rossia* of November 17/30, 1913. (F.O. 55019/54239/13/7.)]

which she owes her liberation; sooner or later she must return to the Russian fold, though that consummation can scarcely be hoped for while M. Radoslavew and M. Gennadiew remain in power.

I have, &c.
HUGH O'BEIRNE.

No. 322.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 57405/55450/13/44.

(No. 1009.) Confidential.

Sir,

Constantinople, D. December 16, 1913.

R. December 22, 1913.

With reference to my despatch No. 996 Confidential,⁽¹⁾ I have the honour to report that the Bulgarian Minister called upon me this morning to discuss the general situation.

He said that the Bulgarian Government would, he hoped, shortly conclude treaties of peace with both Greece and Servia which might improve the situation diplomatically. It was necessary to be on speaking terms with both countries especially Servia, and much to be desired that Servia would make a beau geste and restore to Bulgaria a small mountainous angle of country which included Ishtib and which was entirely inhabited by Bulgarians. That would have a most excellent effect on the relations of the two countries and upon the chance of preserving peace.

He referred to the difficulties experienced with Greece in respect of the Albanian frontier and said that he supposed it was largely a case of blackmail, and that the Greeks wanted the Powers to let them keep the islands.

I asked his views on the subject, and he replied that he supposed that a compromise would be arrived at and that Turkey would be allowed to keep those islands that lay close to her shores such as Mitylene and Chios. If they were mulcted of these islands, then war was, he feared, inevitable in the spring:—the Turkish troops would move into Thrace and Bulgaria would be powerless to prevent them.

I have, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.

(¹) [*v. supra*, pp. 286–7, No. 319.]

No. 323.

Sir M. de Bunsen to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 485/485/14/39.

(No. 2.)

Sir,

Vienna, D. January 1, 1914.

R. January 5, 1914.

I asked M. Jovanovich, Servian Minister, a day or two ago if he could tell me what prospect there was of the Servian Government acceding to the arrangements recently said to have been concluded at Vienna between the competent French and Austrian banking groups in regard to the lines of the Oriental Railway Company

which ran through Servian and Greek territory.⁽¹⁾ The arrangements in question contemplated, if I was rightly informed, the formation of separate Servian and Greek railway companies, a third of whose capital would be respectively either Servian or Greek, a third French, and a third Austro-Hungarian.

M. Jovanovich said M. Pasich, and one other member of the Government, were partisans of some such arrangement as the one proposed, and if M. Pasich retained office a little while longer, which seemed doubtful, the Franco-Austrian scheme would very likely be adopted in one form or another by the Servian Government, which was greatly influenced by the personality of M. Pasich. If M. Pasich fell, he doubted if the scheme would gain acceptance at Belgrade. There were two main objections to it. One was the undertaking which it required of Serbia that the Austro-Hungarian group should be allowed to retain its full third of the capital of the Servian Company during the remainder of the Oriental Railway Company's concession, that is for 45 years from the present time. In other words Serbia would be precluded during that period from buying out the Austro-Hungarian shareholders. This would be a departure from the usual practice of rendering a foreign, or partly foreign railway company liable to purchase at any time, on equitable terms, by the Government of the country through which it passed. He thought the Servian Government would not easily be induced to renounce all rights of purchase for so long a period.

The second great objection to the scheme was the requirement that Serbia should link up her existing railway system with that of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Serbia was quite ready to do this if it could be done simultaneously with the completion of the line from the Danube to the Adriatic. But Austria was for ever postponing discussion of the questions connected with the construction of this important line. Her object evidently was to draw as large a portion as she could of the trade of Serbia over the Bosnian lines, and to defer putting into execution the engagement she had made in London to give Servian trade an exit through one of the Albanian ports, until such time as an Albanian railway should have been constructed with Austrian capital and placed predominantly under Austrian control. Then only would Serbia be invited to connect one of her railways with the Albanian railway, and to accept for her trade the port of exit which formed the Adriatic terminus of the latter railway. Serbia was to have no voice in the selection of the said port of exit, and it was evidently intended that she should have nothing to do with the construction of the Albanian line, although her interest in it would be so considerable. Means would be found he feared to nullify the concession by which Austria-Hungary had been induced by the other Powers to render less humiliating to Serbia her demand for the evacuation of Albania by Servian troops. Servian trade was never to be given an easy outlet into the Adriatic. It was to be forced into channels conveying the bulk of it into the territories of a not over friendly neighbouring Power.

M. Jovanovich thought the discussion of the Austro-French scheme would probably be opened at Belgrade in the course of the next week or two.

The Servian Minister is disappointed with the results of the recent Balkan Wars as affecting his own country. Serbia has been headed off from the Adriatic, and whereas her aspirations had always been in the past for expansion northwards and westwards, she had now been forced southwards over regions inhabited by conflicting races and offering a very difficult task to the Government which had been compelled by circumstances to keep order there. Even if eventually Serbia coalesced with Montenegro, access to the Adriatic would not thereby be rendered easier for her than it now is, for it would be impossible to construct through lines of railway from Serbia across the mountainous regions of Montenegro to the sea.

I have, &c.

MAURICE DE BUNSEN.

(1) [*cp. supra*, pp. 285-6, No. 318.]

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 1653/1653/14/7.

(No. 3.) Secret.

St. Petersburg, D. January 6, 1914.

Sir,

R. January 12, 1914.

The Bulgarian Minister came to see me on the 26th of last month and said that, knowing that I had always been a true friend of Bulgaria, King Ferdinand had desired him to discuss the present situation with me and to invite my views as to the course which it was to Bulgaria's interest to steer under present circumstances. Ought she, General Dimitrieff added, to look to Austria or to Russia to help her out of the present difficulties.

I told General Dimitrieff that, if I was to discuss this question with him, it must be on the express understanding that I was not speaking for my Government nor in my official capacity as His Majesty's Ambassador, but merely as a private individual. On the General assenting, I said that Bulgaria was at present in the position of a man recovering from a severe illness, who was still unable to walk without assistance, and there was no doubt in my own mind as to the quarter where she ought to seek it. During the first Balkan war Bulgaria had enjoyed Russia's sympathy and moral support, and at the Conference of Ambassadors, held at St. Petersburg last spring,⁽²⁾ Monsieur Sazonow, supported by Monsieur Delcassé and myself, had succeeded in reducing to a minimum Roumania's claims to a rectification of her frontier, in spite of the support given to the latter by the Representatives of the Triple Alliance. It was the answer returned by King Ferdinand to the telegram, which the Emperor of Russia had addressed to His Majesty and to the King of Servia on the eve of the outbreak of the second Balkan war,⁽³⁾ that had deeply offended the Emperor and had alienated the sympathies of His Government. Resentment at this open rejection of her pacific counsels, and the belief that Bulgaria was steering an Austrian course, had made Russia turn a deaf ear to her appeals for assistance when Roumania threatened mobilisation and, so long as there was an Austrophil Government in power at Sofia, Russia would not, I believed, raise a finger to help her. What Bulgaria wanted most at present was money; but Paris, the most important of all money markets, would be closed to her till Russia said the word. In my opinion therefore, there was only one road for Bulgaria to follow and that was to regain Russia's confidence and friendship; but to do so she must first convince the Russian Government of the sincerity of her own professions of friendship and abandon all idea of pursuing a policy "*à double face*." I did not believe that it was to her interest to conclude an alliance with Turkey, as it might tempt her to embark on a policy of adventure, nor did I believe that Austria was so powerful a factor, either for good or for evil to her, as Russia. While, therefore, it would be well for her to cultivate good neighbourly relations both with Turkey and Austria, I should personally advise her to try to convince Russia that she was "*solidaire*" with her in all questions affecting the Balkans. To a question addressed to me by General Dimitrieff as to whether a close understanding with Russia would carry with it the necessity of re-establishing good and friendly relations with Servia, I replied that it would undoubtedly do so. I quite understood how difficult it would be for Bulgaria to reconcile herself to such a course and I fully sympathised with what must be the General's feelings at seeing how the great expectations founded on his brilliant victories in Thrace had one by one been nullified—but the course which I had indicated was I believed the only one, on which Bulgaria could embark with safety.

(1) [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Prime Minister. A copy was sent to Sofia.]

(2) [*cp. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II), pp. 1170-1, SUBJECT INDEX, sub RUMANIA, *Bulgaria and, Conference of Ambassadors at St. Petersburg.*]

(3) [*v. ibid.*, pp. 847-8, No. 1055, *encl.*]

General Dimitrieff has throughout his life been so closely associated with the extreme Russophil party in Bulgaria that I was not surprised at his expressing a general concurrence in my views. He would report them, he said, to King Ferdinand and he trusted that he might count on my doing all that I could to facilitate the success of his Mission.

After once more impressing on the General the purely personal character of our conversation I said that I had already on more than one occasion endeavoured to dispose Monsieur Sazonow in Bulgaria's favour and I should always be happy to give him any assistance in my power. If I might, however, make a suggestion, I thought that it would be more to the point were King Ferdinand to charge him, when he presented his letters of credence, to assure the Emperor in an unequivocal manner that Bulgaria would in the future cast in her lot unreservedly with Russia.

I repeated to Monsieur Sazonow, whom I saw a few days later, the gist of the above conversation and remarked that, as it was not to our interest to throw Bulgaria into the arms of the Triple Alliance, I hoped that he would not be too hard on the Bulgarians if they came to him in a repentant spirit. His Excellency replied that I had given General Dimitrieff very sound advice and that if the King would only break with the Austrophil party Russia would adopt a more benevolent attitude towards Bulgaria and place no further difficulties in the way of her obtaining a loan on the Paris market.

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

MINUTES.

Sir G. Buchanan's advice was very good, but if we approve it officially, we rather destroy its character as an expression of private and individual opinion.

G. R. C.
12.1.14.

I quite agree with Mr. Clerk. Of course if King Ferdinand had followed the advice of the Emperor of Russia she [*sic*: Bulgaria] would not have met with the disaster which overwhelmed her.

A. N.

Sir G. Buchanan rose to the occasion admirably and was quite right to speak as he did; but speaking in his personal capacity he could speak with less reserve than if he had been speaking under instructions. It is therefore not a case for official approval.

It has to be remembered that King Ferdinand will whenever it suits him give at Vienna an account or a version of what Sir G. Buchanan said.

E. G.

[*ED. NOTE.*—On January 9, 1914, Sir Edward Grey sent telegrams, D. 3.30 p.m., giving instructions to Sir F. Bertie (No. 12), to Sir E. Goschen (No. 9), to Sir M. de Bunsen (No. 5), to Sir R. Rodd (No. 3), and to Sir G. Buchanan (No. 9). The telegrams referred to the communications made by Greece and Servia regarding the annexations under the Treaties of 1913 (*v. supra*, pp. 287-8, *Ed. note*), and expressed Sir Edward Grey's views as follows:—

"H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] are of opinion on the other hand that these new territorial arrangements constitute a departure from the Treaty of Berlin and cannot therefore acquire formal validity without the expressed assent of the Powers signatories of that Treaty. The Powers are free to withhold that assent and, until they give it, the Capitulations do not lapse in the newly-acquired territories, though to abolish them no action is necessary beyond the formal recognition of their annexation.

H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] consider, however, that it is in the general interest that the situation should be regularized as soon as possible and they are therefore anxious to learn the views and intentions of the Powers on this subject, especially since it involves the question of the protection of religious minorities in the annexed territories, which were guaranteed under the Treaty of Berlin. Y[our] E[xcellency] will find the Resolution on this point which was accepted by the Ambassadors' meeting in the Turkish War print of July 29/13, Section 24.⁽¹⁾

⁽¹⁾ [*cp. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II), pp. 942-3, *Ed. note.*]

That Resolution deals only with Servia and Montenegro, but H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] think that it might reasonably be extended to cover all the recent territorial changes.

Y[our] E[xc]ellency should inform the Gov[ernment] to which you are accredited of the above and should enquire whether they propose to recognize the annexations unconditionally or subject to any, and, if so, what conditions. Y[our] E[xc]ellency should further state that H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] on their part would like to make their recognition subject to the condition that the equal religious or national rights of minorities, as guaranteed under the Treaty of Berlin, in the territories severally annexed by Roumania, Bulgaria, Servia, Montenegro and Greece or created by the formation of the State of Albania, shall be fully maintained and guaranteed." (F.O. 72/72/14/44)]

No. 325.

Mr. O'Reilly to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 2419/2419/14/7.

(No. 6.)

Sir :—

Sofia, D. January 13, 1914.

R. January 19, 1914.

Though it is now over five months since the signature of the Peace of Bucarest, direct diplomatic relations between Servia and Bulgaria are only now about to be resumed. The antipathy between the two countries is as old as Bulgaria, it smouldered during the life of the Balkan League, only to break out tenfold in the war of the sometime Allies. Even had the main result of that war been accepted as final by Bulgaria, the hatred it revived would have been kept up by subsequent events. The seizure by the Servians of Bozhdaritsa, a commanding frontier post near Kustendil, a dispute as to the possession of the frontier railway station at Ochrlar,⁽¹⁾ and the prolonged retention of prisoners of war by both sides, on various pleas, are minor matters which have been arranged, or are in a fair way of settlement. But the position of the Bulgarian population, their schools and churches, in Servian Macedonia remains likely to prevent a reconciliation for many a long year.

From the translation of the Regulations enclosed in my despatch No. 166 of October 23, 1913,⁽²⁾ you will judge of the spirit in which the Servian Government are disposed to treat their new subjects. Not that even millennial conditions in Macedonia under Servian rule would reconcile Bulgaria to the loss of her Irredenta. The question is likely to be the governing factor for the next generation, not only of relations with Servia, but of Bulgarian foreign policy in general. It is one which Bulgarian statesmen could not force themselves to forget, even if not reminded of it by thousands of refugees, and the number of influential Macedonians resident in Bulgaria.

Powerless to act herself for the moment, Bulgaria would welcome the exercise by the Signatories of the Treaty of Berlin, of their rights as protectors of subject races and religious minorities, in favour of the Exarchist communities and institutions. It has even been suggested, seriously enough to merit public deprecation by the Exarch, that the more active protection of the Catholic Powers should be sought by the entry of the Macedonian Bishoprics into communion with the See of Rome.

It is only after long and strenuous efforts that Russian diplomacy has succeeded in bringing about the resumption of direct diplomatic relations. Monsieur Tchalak Antich, hitherto Agent and Consul General in Cairo, has been accepted as Servian Minister at Sofia, and Monsieur Tchaprachikoff, hitherto Assistant Private Secretary to King Ferdinand, has been appointed Bulgarian representative at Belgrade.

⁽¹⁾ [In a letter dated January 23, Mr. O'Reilly wrote to correct this statement: "the frontier station of Okchilar" *[sic]* was not in dispute between Bulgaria and Servia, but between Bulgaria and Greece. The dispute with Servia was concerning "a small area on the frontier of the Strumitsa district." (F.O. 2419/1914/14/7.)]

⁽²⁾ [Mr. O'Reilly's despatch (No. 166), D. October 23, R. October 27, 1913, is not reproduced as the contents are sufficiently indicated above. (F.O. 48660/48660/13/44.)]

M. Antich is said to be of a moderate and conciliatory disposition, and was popular as Secretary at the Servian Legation here some years ago. The Bulgarian appointment seems more open to criticism. M. Tchaprachikoff, who will be known to you as having been Secretary to the Bulgarian Peace Delegates in London,⁽³⁾ has not only no personal or political standing, but is remembered to have vacated his position as Secretary of Legation in Vienna in consequence of some difficulty not unconnected with the Legation accounts. He is, however, a great favourite of M. Dobrovitch, the King's Principal Private Secretary, to whose favour, and to the difficulty of finding another candidate, his appointment is probably due.

Like that of General Markoff to Berlin, it is criticised in Opposition circles, as implying the intention of His Majesty to continue that interference in Foreign Policy which recently produced such disastrous results.

I have, &c.

W. E. O'REILLY.

(³) [*v. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II), pp. 1026-63, *App* III]

No. 326.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 2703/422/14/39.

(No. 12.)

Sir;—

Belgrade, D. January 17, 1914.

R. January 20, 1914.

Since writing my despatch No. 3 of the 5th instant⁽²⁾ which was the last I had the honour to address you upon the internal politics of Servia, a situation has developed which throws into relief certain characteristic aspects of public life in this country and the dangerous undercurrents to which it is exposed.

It has now transpired that the resignation of the Minister of War, General Boshanovitch, was only partly due to the refusal of the Cabinet to accept his War Budget, and that the real motive lay in his having obtained the Royal Pardon for a certain Major Wemitch who had been convicted of having killed a Servian soldier under somewhat uncalculated circumstances in the course of the recent war. It appears that the General surreptitiously included the Major's name in a general list of recommendations to mercy, and that His Majesty, who was suffering from a violent attack of rheumatism at the time, was incapacitated from going carefully through the list. When this became known a great outcry arose in the press and the Cabinet at once disclaimed all knowledge of General Boshanovitch's action and disavowed him.

The real interest of the episode lies in the fact that General Boshanovitch is a prominent member of the powerful officers' League known as the "Black Hand," which originated in the conspiracy against the late King Alexander and which is so influential that the present Government has hitherto been obliged to keep in touch with it. The apparent aim of the League is to sacrifice everything to the upbuilding of a powerful army with an ultimate view to a war with Austria, and the consolidation of a unified Slav Kingdom. The action of the Government in disavowing the Minister of War and forcing his resignation has constituted the first evidence of their desire to free themselves from the influence of the "Black Hand." The result is considerable tension in political and military circles and a gathering of excited Officers in the principal cafés of Belgrade. Things may possibly reach an acute stage should

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King. A copy was sent to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [Mr. Crackanthorpe's despatch (No. 3), D. January 5, R. January 9, 1914, reported that a provisional solution of the Bulgarian Cabinet crisis had been found. The resignation of the Ministry had not been accepted by the King, the only change being that in the Ministry of War. (F.O. 1082/422/14/39.)]

the Government ultimately offer the portfolio of war to a civilian. They have hitherto found it impossible to secure its acceptance by a military candidate in view of the fact that all such candidates are either connected with or indirectly controlled by the Officers' League, and they are thus in the difficult dilemma of having to choose between the reinstatement of General Boshanovitch, which would discredit them in the eyes of the general public, or the appointment of a civilian.

Meanwhile a comic attempt has been made by the Government to win over the Belgrade policemen by a general bestowal of decorations.

I have, &c.

DAYRELL CRACKANTHORPE.

No. 327.

Sir R. Rodd to Sir Edward Grey.(¹)

F.O. 4426/2419/14/7.

(No. 37.) Confidential.

Rome, D. January 22, 1914.

Sir :—

R. January 31, 1914.

I have the honour to report that the Bulgarian Minister came to see me this afternoon and in the course of a long conversation told me certain things relating to recent history which were new to me, and which are, I think, worth placing on record. I have on a former occasion reported his view that Monsieur Daneff's obstinacy in refusing to come to terms with Roumania at the beginning of the Balkan war, was the principal cause of his country's losing nearly all the fruits of a victorious campaign.⁽²⁾ He remains of the same opinion, and told me that he had used all the influence which he could bring to bear to induce the Bulgarian Government to purchase the friendship of Roumania by reasonable concessions, and thus secure at least her neutrality if not her active support. But M. Daneff was convinced that no concession was necessary, because he felt absolutely sure that Russia could be counted on to prevent any act of aggression by Roumania. And he was, M. Rizoff said, in a sense justified in holding this conviction, because—he might tell me now—Russia had in 1902 contracted a secret treaty with Bulgaria guaranteeing her integrity.⁽³⁾ This was the point which was new to me. It was true that after the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina the Russian Government had given notice to Bulgaria that some modifications would have to be made in that Treaty, but no modifications had been introduced, and therefore until it was denounced or altered, Bulgaria was entitled to consider it as having full effect, and as guaranteeing her against Roumanian invasion. Nevertheless when the critical moment came Russia washed her hands of the matter and refused to intervene. That it may not have been to Russia's interest to do so may well be, but to Bulgaria it must have seemed like the repudiation of an engagement, which was accompanied by the transfer of Russian support to Serbia as the representative of the Slav idea in the Balkans. Bulgaria had therefore, M. Rizoff said, little confidence in Russian professions and he was inclined to fear intrigues, similar to those which cost Prince Alexander of Battenberg his throne, against the present dynasty. He had, however, no anxiety as to their succeeding.

He was somewhat gloomy about the present position of Bulgaria, and feared that the Turks might take advantage of her present isolated and exhausted condition to

(¹) [This despatch was sent to St. Petersburg (as No. 42) on February 9.]

(²) [A sketch of Rumano-Bulgar relations, included by Sir G. Barclay in the *Annual Report for Rumania for the Year 1913*, is printed in *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II), pp. 1068-74, App. VI.]

(³) [*v. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II), pp. 1005-6, App. I.]

endeavour to recover further territory in Thrace. He thought that an understanding with Servia and Greece was impracticable except on the basis of their combining to declare the autonomy of Macedonia with any guarantee which might be demanded, but this, he was assured, they would never do. Bulgarians were convinced that the population of Macedonia was preponderatingly Bulgar, and they could therefore never renounce the idea of some day regaining the ground they had lost. This was a far more important question to them than Adrianople, where the Bulgarian population probably only ranked fourth among the various component elements. It was more important than the acquisition of a good port in the *Ægean* because it was a question of national faith. At present Bulgaria did not know where to look for support and encouragement. The one nation for which Bulgarians entertained a real regard was the British nation. But there was no point of contact and practically no community of interest.

I have, &c.

RENNELL RODD.

P.S.—Since this despatch was written I have had the advantage of reading Mr. O'Beirne's despatch No. 379 of the 11th of December last⁽¹⁾ in the print sections. With the light of M. Rizoff's disclosures regarding the secret Treaty of 1902, the attitude of Bulgarian statesmen and of the Bulgarian press, so much resented in St. Petersburg is easily accounted for.

R. R.

MINUTES.

It will require some stronger evidence than this story told by the Bulgarian Minister at Rome, to make one believe that Russia was bound by a secret treaty concluded in 1902 to guarantee Bulgaria's integrity; and that when Russia simply ignored her treaty engagement, Bulgaria accepted the situation without once making an attempt to force Russia's hands by some allusion to this alleged pact. It all sounds very improbable.

E. A. C.

Feb[ruary] 2

Very.

A. N.

E. G.

(1) [*v supra*, pp. 288-9, No 321.]

No. 328.

Sir M. de Bunsen to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Vienna, January 23, 1914.

F.O. 3318/2097/14/44.

D. 7.50 P.M.

Tel. (No. 14.)

R. 11.55 P.M.

My telegram No. 11 of Jan[uary] 22.⁽²⁾

Bulgarian Minister called to-day to give me official assurance that Bulgarian Government has not signed military convention with Turkey.⁽³⁾ Bulgarian Minister says that his country is completely exhausted, and will not allow herself to be drawn by Turkey into a war with Greece.

Greek Chargé d'Affaires, however, still believes that an agreement exists.

(1) [This telegram was sent to Sofia (as No. 1); to Belgrade (as No. 2); to Constantinople (as No. 45).]

(2) [Sir M. de Bunsen's telegram (No. 11) of January 22, 1914, D. 8.10 P.M., R. 11.30 P.M., stated that it was believed at Greek and Servian Legations in Vienna that a Military Convention had been signed between Turkey and Bulgaria. (F.O. 3147/2097/14/44.)]

(3) [*v supra*, p 279, *Ed. note.*]

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Constantinople, January 24, 1914.

F.O. 3503/2097/14/44.

D. 2 P.M.

Tel. (No. 54.) Confidential.

R. 5.30 P.M.

Before leaving for Sophia last night Bulgarian Minister called and again enlarged upon the danger of the situation and on Bulgaria's powerlessness to prevent advance of Turkish troops against Greece.

I said that my information was that Turkish troops were hardly in a position to undertake so difficult a campaign, and I asked whether Bulgaria was really powerless to intervene.

He replied that it was out of the question for Bulgaria to intervene, partly because they had no forces in Thrace and could send none except through Turkey, and partly through fear of Roumania. I said that it seemed unlikely that Roumania would intervene in the circumstances which he foresaw. Bulgaria's position in Thrace is, however, very weak, both morally and materially. They have purposely abstained from reoccupying country effectively, and all accounts agree that their presence there has a temporary character only, on the tacit understanding that it will revert to Turkey in certain eventualities; but events have moved too fast for Bulgaria, who is not yet strong enough to play an effective part in the movement for Macedonian autonomy or to control the situation.

My impression is that they fear not so much advance of Turks against Greece as premature reoccupation of Western Thrace and possible understanding between Greece and Turkey, whose position is relatively strong. Minister said incidentally that Turks were complaining of forcible conversion of Pomaks and ill-treatment of Mussulmans.

I pressed him as to this and finally asked him whether Bulgarians and Turks had already made a treaty.

He replied that none had been made.

His insistence on efficacy of Servian and Bulgarian rapprochement, if it could be brought about, in preventing any regrettable developments, is difficult to reconcile with his assertion of powerlessness to prevent Turkish movement against Greece. But it may possibly be explained by willingness of Bulgaria to acquiesce in reoccupation of Western Thrace by Turkey if they can show some territorial gain in Macedonia.

(Sent to Sophia, Athens, and Belgrade.)

MINUTE.

Our information is that Bulgaria is purposely keeping troops out of Thrace, in order to facilitate a Turkish advance against Greece if it is made worth her while. The argument about Rumania is quite unconvincing; nor does Sir L. Mallet's impression as to a possible understanding between Greece and Turkey seem likely. This tel[egram] is disquieting and points towards a Bulgarian desire to excuse in advance her practical complicity in a movement whose likelihood she foresees. The conclusion is that the sooner our proposed formulae are delivered at Athens and Constantinople the better.

R. G. V.

Jan[uary] 26.

G. R. C.

26.1.14.

E. A. C.

Jan[uary] 26.

A. N.

E G.

⁽¹⁾ [A copy of this telegram was sent to the Director of Military Operations on January 28.]

No. 330.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾*Belgrade, January 25, 1914.*

F.O. 3507/3507/14/39.

D. 2 P.M.

Tel. (No. 13.)

R. 5 P.M.

Servian Crown Prince, accompanied by the Prime Minister, left the day before yesterday for St. Petersburg. Ostensible object of the visit is to attend the christening of the King of Servia's grandson, but I have information that Prime Minister's real object is to endeavour to bring about, in conjunction with Greek Prime Minister and under direct patronage of Russia, a formal understanding between Greece, Servia, Montenegro, and Roumania, in view of the dangerous developments in Turkey. I am further told that, as at present arranged, Servian and Greek Prime Ministers will subsequently journey together to Bucharest.

(Sent to Athens, St. Petersburg, and Bucharest.)⁽²⁾⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Constantinople (as No. 46); to Sofia (as No. 2).]⁽²⁾ [*cp. Imperialismus*, 1st Ser, Vol. I, p. 83, No. 98.]

No. 331.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾*Belgrade, January 27, 1914.*

F.O. 3951/3507/14/39.

D. 8.30 P.M.

Tel. (No. 15.)

R. 4.40 P.M.

My telegram No. 13 of Jan[uary] 25⁽²⁾: Relations among Balkan States.

View here is that present Bulgarian Government and King Ferdinand himself are in very precarious position and are ready to risk adventure in order to divert public opinion from internal politics. If Servian estimate is correct it may explain anxiety of those, such as Bulgarian Minister at Constantinople, whose fortunes are not tied to those of the present Austro-phil Government and who may look to a return to the Russian fold and consequent reconciliation with Servia as the only means of salvation. My impression derived from recent conversations at Russian Legation is that Russian Government whose policy is directed towards a Servian-Bulgarian reconciliation under Russian patronage believe this can never be effected so long as King Ferdinand is on the throne and would willingly bring about situation entailing his abdication. I now gather that if St. Petersburg visit is satisfactory Servian Prime Minister may desire to avoid ostentatious visit to Bucharest.

(Sent to Athens, Sofia and Constantinople.)

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to St. Petersburg (as No. 42); to Berlin (as No. 42).]⁽²⁾ [*v. immediately preceding document.*]

No. 332.

Mr. O'Reilly to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾*Sofia, January 29, 1914.*

F.O. 4243/2419/14/7.

D. 8 P.M.

Tel. (No. 1.)

R. 10 P.M.

There has been a sudden *détente* between Bulgaria and Greece, and Prime Minister tells me that diplomatic relations are in a fair way of being resumed very

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to St. Petersburg (as No. 45); to Paris (as No. 38); to Berlin (as No. 35).]

soon. With regard to Servia, he said that in order to restore good understanding it would be sufficient that liberty should be allowed to Bulgarian churches and schools in Macedonia. Territorial concessions mentioned by Bulgarian Minister at Constantinople were only ideas. He would learn more about disposition of Servian Government from new Servian Minister in a few days. He said that positively no agreement had been signed with Turkey, and this I am convinced is true, although close understanding is being maintained and all eventualities have been discussed in detail.

Situation seems to be that Bulgaria intends to regain her losses at some time and somehow, and that King and Government are anxious for some success soon in order to strengthen their position, and for this they would take some risks if unavoidable. They cannot control events, and must be strictly opportunist. Thus they contemplate giving Turks a passage, and even support, in consideration of exchange of Dedeagatch for territory to be taken from Greeks, but they do not yet know how far Roumania would allow them to go, and they do not trust Turks to keep bargain. Consequently they would prefer to obtain something from Greece and Servia in return for not assisting Turkey, and this is probably the meaning of M. Toshef's language about Servia and *détente* with Greece. On above supposition Bulgarian Government are likely to stay on the fence as long as possible, and not to precipitate events. Armaments which they are buying meanwhile would be required in order to oppose passage of Turks as much as in order to attack Greece or Servia, and therefore prove nothing.

I have no confirmation of the transitory character of Bulgarian administrative arrangements in new territory.

The position of the King of the Bulgarians I find it difficult to judge, but Russians are doing their best to make it precarious, and Russian Legation do not conceal their views. This is unfortunate, as tending to drive His Majesty into adventures counselled by Austria.

I hear on good authority that Bulgarian and Albanian leaders have met at Vienna, and that Austrian Government has promised them arms and ammunition. It has not been agreed, however, whether their combined action is to begin this spring or not.

(Sent to Constantinople, Belgrade, Bucharest, and Athens.)

No. 333.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 4619/4619/14/39.

(No. 27.) Confidential.

Sir;—

Belgrade, D. January 29, 1914.

R. February 2, 1914.

The Servian Secretary General told me in confidence on the 26th instant that the Austrian and Italian Ministers, acting presumably under instructions from their Governments, had been making concurrent enquiries of him as to the exact scope of the Serbo-Greek Military Convention.⁽²⁾ He seemed to think this information was being sought for the special benefit of Turkey or Bulgaria or both, and had replied that the information was confidential and that he was not in a position to impart it. Subsequently the Italian Minister told me he was convinced that Greece and Servia had an agreement of the closest possible nature and embracing all contingencies. My own information is that the Treaty and Military Convention were signed at the time of the meeting between the Greek and Servian Prime Ministers at Uscub in June last

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Prime Minister. Copies were sent to Athens; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II), pp. 1020-6, App. II. Both the Treaty of Alliance and the Military Convention were signed at Salonica.]

and were renewed to face future eventualities when Monsieur Venizelos passed through Belgrade last August after the signature of the Treaty of Bucharest. I have no accurate information as to its terms, but I find that the view is held at both the Russian and Roumanian Legations here that should Turkey attack Greece through Thrace Servia would consider herself at war with Bulgaria even though the latter took no overt action.

I have, &c.

DAYRELL CRACKANTHORPE.

No. 334.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 4620/4619/14/39.

(No. 28.) Very Confidential.

Belgrade, D. January 29, 1914.

Sir;—

R. February 2, 1914.

Subsequently to writing my despatch No. 27 Confidential of to-day's date⁽²⁾ I have learned that a Military Convention was signed on the 16th instant between Greece and Roumania. I have been unable to ascertain its exact terms but I understand that it is intended to supplement the existing Military Convention between Servia and Roumania, entered into immediately after the signature of the Treaty of Bucharest, the scope of which was limited to the maintenance of the status quo in Macedonia.

Thus the circle of Military Conventions between Roumania, Servia and Greece would appear to be complete, but I am given to understand that it is the desire of Monsieur Pashitch to endeavour to extend the understanding so as to cover broad lines of future policy with special reference to anticipated developments in Austria-Hungary.

I have, &c.

DAYRELL CRACKANTHORPE.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Prime Minister. Copies were sent to Bucharest; to Athens; to the Director of Military Operations, Secret.]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

No. 335.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Belgrade, January 30, 1914.

F.O. 4376/2419/14/7.

D. 4 P.M.

Tel. (No. 18.)

R. 5.30 P.M.

Sophia telegram No. 1 of Jan[uary] 29,⁽²⁾ second paragraph.

I hear from a usually reliable source that military convention was signed between Roumania and Greece on the 16th instant. I do not know exact terms, but I understand it is intended to supplement existing Serbo-Roumanian Agreement, and scope is confined to maintenance of the *status quo* in Macedonia.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Bucharest (as No. 2). A copy was sent to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 298-9, No. 332.]

Opinion is held by Roumanian and Russian Legations here that, should Turkey attack Greece through Thrace, with tacit permission of Bulgaria, Servia would, under existing military convention with Greece, consider herself at war with Bulgaria, even if latter took no overt action.

(Sent to Athens, Constantinople, and Sophia.)

No. 336.

Sir R. Rodd to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 5555/4560/14/53.

(No. 45.)

Sir;—

Rome, D. January 31, 1914.

R. February 7, 1914.

I have the honour to report that the Servian Chargé d'Affaires told me that his Government were rather anxious at a tendency which they considered appreciable on the part of Austria-Hungary and Italy to work for a kind of monopoly in the new Albanian State. They had, for instance, learned that an agreement had been made between the two Powers to the effect that each of them should immediately inform the other of any concessions obtained, and offer a priority of participation. The Servian Government were afraid that, owing to the isolated position of Albania in respect of all the other Powers except Italy and Austria-Hungary, the two latter would succeed in getting everything into their hands, without their manoeuvres attracting much attention. The Servian Government was very much alive to the danger to themselves involved in Albania becoming a sort of substitute for the lost sandjak, and as Italy had little capital available for big foreign enterprises they felt that unless some means existed of exercising control, the new State would be economically absorbed by Austria.

I said that I thought the International Commission of Control were there to see that no exclusive privileges should be granted and that Albania should have freedom to secure the most advantageous conditions for her own development. But I did not see how anyone could interfere with private contracts into which any two States might enter to afford each other participation in concessions obtained. To this he agreed but added that his Government hoped the other Powers would not lose sight of the tendency to which he had referred. The Servian Government being on the spot had exceptional opportunities as well as a particular interest in keeping a vigilant eye on the action of their powerful neighbour.

Passing on to other subjects and discussing the relations of his own country to her Balkan neighbours, he said there was no essential hostility to Bulgaria in Servia, and he saw no reason why the two countries should not in a reasonable time come closer together. I said I had thought the Bulgarian sentiment about Macedonia, where they claimed to be in the majority, was a very serious obstacle to this, and that there might be danger of a movement being engineered in Macedonia itself. The Servian Chargé d'Affaires said he knew that country well and was not anxious on that account. It was quite a mistake to try and divide the Slavs in Macedonia into Serbs and Bulgarians; they were really neither the one nor the other, but just Macedonian Slavs who during Turkish rule had come under the influence and culture of one or the other Slav border State. Now that they were liberated from the yoke of Turkey they had no interest to exchange the Government of one Christian State for that of another, and would settle down quietly under Servian rule. But Servia might need Bulgarian neutrality or help some day, when issues, probably inevitable, arose with the powerful neighbouring empire, and it might then become worth her while to rearrange her frontier with Bulgaria in a sense more favourable to the latter.

I have, &c.

RENNELL RODD.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.

Belgrade, February 1, 1914.

F.O. 4560/4560/14/53.

D. 3 P.M.

Tel. (No. 19.) Most Confidential.

R. 9 P.M.

I have information that Servian and Roumanian Governments have been recently concerting lines of future policy towards Albania, and that upon Servian side it is desired that this policy should form one basis of general understanding which Servian Prime Minister is endeavouring to conclude with Roumanian Government.

Servian Government view Austro-Italian attitude towards Albania with great suspicion, and are convinced that Austria and Italy intend to do all in their power to retain Albania within their sphere of influence, and to obstruct its development into a strong and independent State. They suspect that Essad Pasha is being used for this purpose.

Servian Government having failed to obtain rectification of Albanian frontier, desired on strategical and defensive ground, are now anxious to promote growth and friendship of an unencumbered Albania under the Prince of Wied, who, it is believed, would be most unwilling to become an instrument of Austro-Italian policy. For Servia, an independent and friendly Albania would mean tranquillity on her south-west frontier, the release of a considerable portion of her army, and better prospects for consolidation of her new territory. Roumania's interests are identified with this policy, both on family grounds connected with person of Prince of Wied and on political grounds, since friendly relations between Servia and Albania would be a guarantee of peace in Balkans and would render Servia a far more efficient ally in maintenance of *status quo* in Macedonia as against Bulgaria and Turkey.

Everything points to an increasing identification of Servian and Roumanian policy on all questions appertaining to Near East, and it is probable that general understanding will be reached in anticipation of developments in Austria-Hungary.

It would be interesting to know how far Roumania would take Germany into her counsels before finally consenting to fall into line with Servian policy towards Austria-Hungary. It is believed here that Germany anticipates serious troubles in Austria-Hungary at no distant date.

(Sent to Bucharest.)

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

St. Petersburg, February 1, 1914.

F.O. 4565/2419/14/7.

D. 8.30 P.M.

Tel. (No. 29.)

R. 11 P.M.

Sophia telegram No. 1 of Jan[uary] 29.⁽²⁾

I asked Minister for Foreign Affairs whether there was any truth in report that Russia was trying to get rid of King Ferdinand. His Excellency said that, on the contrary, Russian Government were giving His Majesty their support, as were he to go Bulgaria would become a republic. Bulgarian Minister had recently remarked that, in her present straitened circumstances, Bulgaria found her Monarch an expensive

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Sofia (as No. 3); to Constantinople (as No. 55).]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 298-9, No. 332.]

luxury, and that he had replied, quite irrespective of question whether King Ferdinand was a good or a bad Sovereign, Bulgaria must keep him.

His Excellency does not believe Bulgaria will lend Turkey her active co-operation in the event of a conflict with Greece.

No. 339.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.

Belgrade, February 3, 1914.

F.O. 5052/2419/14/7.

D. 3 P.M.

Tel. (No. 21.) Most Confidential.

R. 5.30 P.M.

While the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and the Russian Minister disclaim knowledge of military convention between Greece and Roumania, the Russian Minister declared to the French Minister last night that, in the event of any disturbance in the Balkans, Roumania would take action. The Austrian Minister told me yesterday that he feared that Roumania was now definitely turning towards Russia.

I am unable to guarantee positively the accuracy of information contained in my telegram No. 18 of Jan[uary] 30,⁽¹⁾ especially in the matter of the date of signature, as to which I may possibly have an opportunity of making further enquiries, but my informant, who should be in a position to know, has given me the following particulars as to what has taken place:—

Secret agreement was entered into between Roumania, Greece, and Servia and Montenegro⁽²⁾ at the time of the signature of the Treaty of Bucharest guaranteeing the *status quo* in Macedonia. Treaty of friendship was signed between Roumania and Servia some time in the early autumn,⁽³⁾ which contained clauses on the subject of mutual military assistance for the preservation of the *status quo*. Military convention was signed between Greece and Roumania some time last month supplementing and completing the above arrangements.⁽⁴⁾ My informant has the impression that the treaty of friendship between Roumania and Greece was signed at Athens during the visit of Take Jonescu,⁽⁵⁾ but he is not sure of this.

I believe that discussions will now be centred on future policy towards Austria-Hungary and Albania.

I am told that Roumanian Government have been maintaining the utmost secrecy as to all this, in view of their delicate situation *vis-à-vis* of Austria-Hungary.

(Sent to Constantinople, Athens, Sophia, and Bucharest.)

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 300-1, No. 335.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II), p. 986, No. 1240; p. 1001, No. 1257.]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. ibid.*, pp. 997-8, No. 1252. *cp. also infra*, p. 306, No. 344, and M. Boghitchewitsch: *Die Auswärtige Politik Serbiens*, 1903-1914, Vol. I, pp. 423-4, No. 402. There is a report here from the Servian Minister at Sofia describing a conversation with Sir H. Bax-Ironside on March 7, 1914. No record of this conversation by Sir H. Bax-Ironside has been traced.]

⁽⁴⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp. 300-1, Nos. 334-5; *infra*, p. 304, Nos. 340-1; p. 306, No. 344; pp. 307-10, No. 345; p. 312, No. 347.]

⁽⁵⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp. 281-3, Nos. 314-5.]

No. 340.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾*St. Petersburg, February 4, 1914.*

F.O. 5186/2419/14/7.

D. 8.30 P.M.

Tel. (No. 38.)

R. 11.55 P.M.

In reply to a question which I addressed to him to-day, Minister for Foreign Affairs told me that Greece and Serbia had concluded an alliance for the maintenance of the *status quo* in the Balkans, and had also come to an understanding with Roumania, under which the latter would intervene should Bulgaria attempt to upset the Treaty of Bucharest. Though this alliance was directed mainly against Bulgaria, he gathered that Serbia would have to assist Greece should the latter be attacked by Turkey.⁽²⁾

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Bucharest (as No. 3); to Sofia (as No. 4); to Belgrade (as No. 4); to Athens (as No. 14); to Constantinople (as No. 66). A copy was sent to the Director of Military Operations on February 7.]

⁽²⁾ [A translation of this document is given in *Imperialismus*, 1st Ser., Vol. I, p. 162, No. 171.]

No. 341.

*Sir F. Elliot to Sir Edward Grey.**Athens, February 5, 1914.*

F.O. 5380/2419/14/7.

D. 1.30 P.M.

Tel. (No. 25.) Confidential.

R. 5 P.M.

Belgrade telegram No. 21.⁽¹⁾

Greek Minister for Foreign Affairs denies any arrangement with Roumania in which nevertheless I am inclined to believe. He says that Greek Government are quite satisfied with existing arrangement with Serbia and with determination of Roumania to maintain Treaty of Bucharest.

He regards alleged suggestion of renewal of Balkan alliance as premature and impracticable until relations between Greece and Bulgaria have greatly improved. Suggestion attributed to Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs of an understanding between Serbia and Bulgaria on basis of cession of Ishtib and Kochana he also thinks impracticable as re-opening whole settlement of Bucharest.

Sent to Belgrade, with request to repeat to Sofia and Bucharest.

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 303, No. 339.]

No. 342.

Mr. Akers-Douglas to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 10053/10053/14/7.

(No. 6.) Confidential.

Cettinje, D. February 6, 1914.

Sir,

R. March 7, 1914.

I had the honour to report some months ago⁽²⁾ that the Montenegrin Government was convinced of the necessity of recovering the good-will of Russia. I now learn that—thanks in particular to the efforts of the Russian Chargé d'Affaires—the relations

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King. A copy was sent to St. Petersburg.]

⁽²⁾ [The reference is probably to Mr. Akers-Douglas' telegram (No. 135) of October 27, 1913. It is not reproduced as the contents are sufficiently indicated above. (F.O. 48902/48902/13/7.)]

between Cettigne and Petersburg have so much improved that, after having incurred the displeasure of her old protector and having been considered as a black sheep, Montenegro is now about to be restored to the fold.

The recent visit of Montenegrin officers to Petersburg, where in company with representatives of other Balkan States they assisted at the unveiling of a monument to the Grand Duke Nicolas, had, it is said, no special political significance as regards this country. But there have been signs lately that the King of Montenegro has been making his peace with the Russian Court: and I have reason to believe that the Crown Prince will shortly pay a visit to Petersburg. It is even expected that the payment of the Russian subvention may soon be resumed, and that a Russian military mission may return to Cettigne.

The incorporation of Montenegro into Serbia is commonly said, since the Balkan wars, to be merely a question of time: it is thought that at any rate a desire for union will gradually increase among Montenegrins with the growing feeling that this country is not rich or strong enough to stand alone. Supporters of this idea are certainly to be found in Montenegro itself, and the advantages of a close union with the far more powerful sister-kingdom are often discussed. The re-organisation of the army, which is recognised to have shewn itself sadly deficient in the requirements of modern warfare as well as lacking in leadership, is being demanded. Possibly a proposal may be made to re-organise it on the Servian model, though it is probable that Russian instructors will again be seen here. The question of a Customs Union with Serbia may also be discussed.

The impoverishment of the country has produced a good deal of discontent, and the King is said to be anxious as to the growth of socialistic ideas and the attitude of the extreme Radical party. As yet however no agitation for a change in the status of the country is noticeable; and among other considerations the regard for the King and his dynasty (although the latter has suffered a loss of popularity and there are signs of a more democratic spirit) will have its effect among older Montenegrins.

In spite, perhaps, of personal feelings and dynastic sentiments, King Nicolas himself appears to have been convinced of the necessity of a very close co-operation with Serbia: and the fact that the two States now have a common frontier and that Montenegro owes to Serbia almost all her territorial gains of the war is sufficient to make this inevitable. In any new Balkan alliances or understandings Montenegro will no doubt follow the lead of Serbia and be found upon her side.

Whatever may ultimately happen it does not seem that a union with Serbia is a matter for immediate pre-occupation. Austria will presumably oppose with all means in her power and for as long as possible such an extension of Servian influence and her consequent access to the Adriatic. Moreover it appears, according to my Russian colleague, that Russia has no desire now to see such a consummation. Speaking confidentially he told me his Government had decided that it would be impolitic to neglect Montenegro; their present policy was rather to help her to stand alone as long as possible and to encourage her economic development. A union with Serbia might come eventually, and after the death of the present King the situation in Montenegro might change; but Russia would not encourage it; and this not because she had any special interest in this country nor because of Slav sentiment, but in order to maintain her own prestige, to preserve the balance of power in the Balkans and—above all—to avoid the serious complications and warlike developments which such a project would at present entail. These views, so Monsieur Obnorski told me, were shared by the Italian Government who were opposed to the idea in question and for much the same reasons.

I have, &c.

A. AKERS-DOUGLAS.

No. 343.

Sir H. Bar-Ironside to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Sofia, February 8, 1914.

F.O. 5724/2419/14/7.

D. 4.10 P.M.

Tel. (No. 4.) Confidential.

R. 6 P.M.

In the course of a conversation with King's "chef de cabinet" yesterday he said that only object of the Bulgarian Government just now was to remain on good terms with their neighbours; that they would on no account follow an aggressive policy, and that the country required a long rest to recuperate from the late wars. The above was, he added, the policy of both the King and the Cabinet; the former wished it to be known, as the Bulgarian Government was continually being described to the world as anxious to embark on an aggressive and even warlike policy.

Anxiety exists at palace respecting result of elections, on which hinges fate of Sovereign.

(Sent to Constantinople and Belgrade.)

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Bucharest (as No 4); to Athens (as No 18).]

No. 344.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.

Belgrade, February 10, 1914.

F.O. 6825/2419/14/7.

D. 4 P.M.

Tel. (No. 22.) Most Confidential.

R. 5.10 P.M.

My telegram No. 21 of Feb[ruary] 3.⁽¹⁾

My informant, who is in close touch with Servian Foreign Office, gives 5th November as exact date of Servian-Roumanian Treaty of Friendship and Alliance. He tells me that article 2 deals with adjustment of Treaty of Bucharest, and concluding articles contain provision for mutual military assistance in case *status quo* should be disturbed. Date given is interesting as being immediately subsequent to withdrawal of Servian troops from Albania, and, consequently, at a time when Roumania was assured of Servia's unwillingness to pursue an adventurous policy in Albania.

With regard to Graeco-Roumanian military convention my information is that it provides for mobilisation and intervention on the part of Roumania in the event of joint Turco-Bulgarian attack, but for mobilisation only in the event of Bulgaria allowing passage for Turkish troops through Thrace.⁽²⁾

My impression is that discussions at Bucharest are now being directed towards triple *entente* between the three countries covering the line of future policy.

I hear that the Czar and M. Sazonof exercised strong pressure on Servian Prime Minister at St. Petersburg to induce Servian Government to make Bulgaria territorial concessions, but that Servian Prime Minister pointed out impossibility of this, and finally won over Russian Government to Servian point of view.

(Sent to Constantinople, Athens, Sophia, and Bucharest.)

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 303, No. 339.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 303, No. 339, and *note* (4).]

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 6880/3507/14/39.

(No. 40.) Very Confidential.

Belgrade, D. February 11, 1914.

Sir;—

R. February 16, 1914.

Great interest is aroused in Belgrade by the Conferences recently held at St. Petersburg between the Czar, Monsieur Sazonow, and the Servian and Greek Prime Ministers, and by the visit which the two latter statesmen have just concluded at Bucharest.⁽²⁾ At first the Russian Legation here gave an unqualified denial to the rumour that Monsieur Pashitch's visit to St. Petersburg possessed political significance, and ascribed it wholly to His Excellency's desire to attend the christening of King Peter's first grandchild. Subsequently the belief gained ground that the visit was in connection with certain matrimonial projects, and the chances of a marriage being arranged between the Crown Prince Alexander and the Czar's eldest daughter were and are still being freely discussed. It was only when news was received that Monsieur Pashitch was remaining on in St. Petersburg owing to indisposition and would consequently have a meeting there with Monsieur Venizelos and that it was his intention to visit Bucharest before returning to Belgrade, that it began to be recognised that important political developments were in reality taking place.

As far as it is possible to judge at the present moment, the Conferences at St. Petersburg seem to have had a double purpose as seen from the Servian and from the Russian point of view. On the Russian side it appears that a great effort was made to induce the Servian Government to pave the way to a reconciliation with Bulgaria by granting territorial concessions, presumably in the neighbourhood of Ishtip and Kochana. I hear that both the Czar and Monsieur Sazonow exercised all possible pressure on Monsieur Pashitch in this sense; that Monsieur Pashitch explained at length the reasons which made it impossible for Serbia to cede any territory to Bulgaria; and that he finally won over the Russian Government to the Servian point of view. The arguments used by His Excellency were in all probability those which have of late been constantly heard here, viz that the Austro-phil character and adventurous disposition of the present Bulgarian Government preclude any real *détente* at the present moment, and that even if Serbia were in the mood to make certain territorial concessions it is exceedingly improbable that they would content Bulgaria who is in reality covertly aiming at the ultimate acquisition of the entire territory for which she went to war last summer.

In so far therefore as Russia founded any hopes on a Serbo-Bulgarian reconciliation under existing conditions, the Conferences at St. Petersburg seem to have failed in their object, but I gather that Monsieur Pashitch's object, which was to justify Serbia's attitude in Russian eyes, was satisfactorily attained.

There is, however, every reason to believe that Monsieur Pashitch's main purpose in visiting St. Petersburg and Bucharest was to bring about a formal understanding between Servia, Roumania and Greece covering general lines of future policy not only towards the Turco-Bulgarian danger, of which I believe the immediate needs to have been already provided for by separate arrangements recently come to between the three countries, but towards Albania and Austria-Hungary. There are, moreover, numerous questions of an economic and religious character outstanding between Servia and Greece, such as that of a free zone for Servia at the port of Salonika, guarantees for Salonika trade with the Servian hinterland, and the future relationship to the œcumenical Patriarch of the Greeks in new Servian territory. It is probable that all these questions obtained preliminary discussion at St. Petersburg and will continue to be considered here in Belgrade where Monsieur Pashitch and Monsieur Venizelos

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe; to Lord Morley.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. infra*, p. 312, No. 347.]

are due to arrive tonight. It is also evident that, granted Monsieur Pashitch's desire to bring about a Triple Entente between Serbia, Roumania and Greece, he could hardly have proceeded direct to Bucharest for this purpose without a previous visit to St. Petersburg with the object of offering a full explanation as to Servian foreign policy and of obtaining Russian sanction. It is, therefore, to be presumed that whatever has been settled at Bucharest has the direct approval of Russia.

Circumstances seem to have combined to draw Roumania, Serbia and Greece closer together during recent months. The foundations of a future Entente were laid last August and the first positive engagement between the three Governments was embodied in the secret Agreement to uphold the *status quo* in Macedonia come to immediately after the signature of the Treaty of Bucharest.⁽³⁾ I have information that a Treaty of Friendship and Alliance was signed between Roumania and Serbia on November 5th last⁽⁴⁾ and that it contained clauses providing for mutual assistance in the event of a disturbance of the *status quo* in Macedonia. I am not in a position to guarantee positively the accuracy of this information since I am not in direct contact with the official source from which it emanates. I venture however to recapitulate certain events which took place in the autumn of last year which seem to make the signature of such a Treaty at least probable.

In the month of September occurred the Albanian invasion and there were concomitant rumours of a pending Turco-Bulgarian attack on Greece and Serbia. The Servian Government were in great anxiety and made an earnest appeal to the Roumanian Government to intervene in the interests of peace (my telegram No. 238 of October 2nd⁽⁵⁾ and despatch No. 176 of October 8th).⁽⁶⁾ It appears that the Roumanian Government asked in reply for a clear explanation of Servian intentions as regards Albania (my telegram No. 239 of October 2nd),⁽⁷⁾ and, being satisfied on this point promised to speak both at Sofia and at Constantinople and, should this prove unavailing to join hands with Greece and Serbia in the event of a Turco-Bulgarian attack (my telegram No. 246 of October 4th).⁽⁸⁾ It would appear, therefore, that the contingency of a joint Turco-Bulgarian attack was not explicitly provided for under the arrangement come to at Bucharest. The final suppression of the Albanian invasion necessitated, however, drastic measures on the part of the Servian Army and the occupation of certain strategic positions within Albania which brought about serious tension between Serbia and Austria-Hungary. At this juncture the Roumanian Government gave counsels of moderation to the Servian Government and pointed out the danger of not showing extreme prudence in the attitude taken towards Austria over the frontier question (my telegram No. 259 of October 19th),⁽⁹⁾ and it is probable that the prompt compliance with Austrian demands on the part of Serbia was due in no small measure to the advice received from Bucharest. By withdrawing unconditionally from Albania, Serbia offered the best proof that her policy towards Albania did not run counter to Roumanian interests in Albania represented in the person of the Prince of Wied, and if a Treaty was in fact signed between the two countries on November 5th,⁽¹⁰⁾ the moment must have appeared a propitious one. Moreover the negotiations then proceeding for a Postal and Telegraph Convention and the agreement in regard to the construction of a bridge across the Danube and the connection of Servian and Roumanian lines whereby Roumania would ultimately secure access to the Adriatic may also have been factors determining Roumania's attitude.

⁽³⁾ [*cp. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II), p. 986, No. 1240; p. 1001, No. 1257]

⁽⁴⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 303, No. 339, and *note* (3).]

⁽⁵⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 23-4, No. 30.]

⁽⁶⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 26-8, No. 33.]

⁽⁷⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 24, No. 30, *note* (4).]

⁽⁸⁾ [Mr. Crackanthorpe's telegram (No. 246) of October 4, 1913, D. 2 P.M., R. 4 P.M., is not reproduced as the contents are sufficiently indicated above. (F.O. 45272/30271/13/44.)]

⁽⁹⁾ [Mr. Crackanthorpe's telegram (No. 259) of October 19, 1913, is not reproduced as the contents are sufficiently indicated above. (F.O. 47490/30271/13/44.)]

⁽¹⁰⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 303, No. 339, and *note* (3).]

Later on the successful mediation of the Roumanian Government between Greece and Turkey, followed by a renewal of the Turco-Bulgarian danger arising from the Islands question, seem to point naturally to the subsequent conclusion of some more definite arrangement between Roumania and Greece, Serbia's ally. This arrangement, according to my information, took the form of a Military Convention signed last month.⁽¹¹⁾ My informant, who is in close touch with the Servian Ministry for Foreign Affairs, who I understand were handed a copy of the convention, tells me that it provides for mobilization and intervention on the part of Roumania in the event of a joint Turco-Bulgarian attack, but for mobilization only in the event of Bulgaria allowing a passage for Turkish troops through Thrace. I gather that the separate arrangements come to between the three countries are of a purely defensive character and that their scope is confined generally to the maintenance of the *status quo* in Macedonia.

It is now apparently the desire of the Servian Prime Minister to supplement individual arrangements by a general tripartite understanding under which Servian, Roumanian and Greek interests in the Near East would be identified and the policy of the three countries would follow parallel lines. If this is so, it is evident that one of the first questions to occupy the attention of the three Governments must be Albania, and I have reason to believe that the Servian and Roumanian Governments already see eye to eye in this matter and have in fact been recently concerting the lines of their future Albanian policy. Whatever may have been the secret hopes and ambitions of Monsieur Spalaikovitch during his brief and somewhat adventurous tenure of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in September and October last, there is every evidence that the Servian Government have now absolutely given up any aggressive designs towards Albania, and that having failed to obtain the rectification of their frontier desired on strategic and defensive grounds, they are desirous of promoting the growth of and cultivating friendship with an unencumbered and independent Albania under the rulership of the Prince of Wied. The Servian Government view Austro-Italian policy towards Albania with great suspicion, and are firmly convinced that Italy and Austria intend to do all in their power to retain Albania within their spheres of influence and to obstruct its development into a strong and independent State. They believe, however, that the Prince of Wied would be most unwilling to become an instrument of this policy. The advantages to Serbia of a free and friendly Albania are obvious. It would mean for her tranquillity on her South Western frontier, the release of a considerable portion of her Army and better prospects for the consolidation of her new territories. Roumania's interests seem to be on all fours with this policy both on account of the ties connecting the Prince of Wied with the Roumanian Royal Family and on political grounds, since friendly relations between Serbia and Albania would constitute a guarantee of peace in the Balkans and would render Serbia a far more efficient ally in the preservation of the *status quo* in Macedonia.

It is at present difficult to foresee whether Serbia will succeed in bringing Roumania into line with her policy towards Austria and in realising her undoubted desire of withdrawing her from Austrian influence. There are indications that Roumania is turning decidedly towards Russia at the present moment, but against this must be set Roumania's well known unwillingness to part with her freedom of action. While, therefore, it seems scarcely probable that Roumania will consent to become a member of a hard and fast Balkan Alliance, it seems probable that she will make provision for the future by coming to a close understanding with Serbia and Greece on all questions appertaining to the Near East, and that should, as is anticipated here, serious troubles shortly arise within Austria-Hungary, Servian and Roumanian policy would be found to be identical.

Finally it appears to me that, having failed to bring about a direct reconciliation between Serbia and Bulgaria in present circumstances, it is Russian policy to foster

(11) [*cp. supra*, p. 303, No. 339, and note (4).]

and encourage a close understanding between Roumania, Servia and Greece, in the hopes of forcing Bulgaria to accept the inevitable and ultimately to enter the new Balkan circle. Whether this can be achieved without a serious upheaval in Bulgaria herself remains yet to be seen.

I have, &c.

DAYRELL CRACKANTHORPE.

No. 346.

Sir M. de Bunsen to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 6901/6901/14/3.

(No. 32.)

Sir,

Vienna, D. February 13, 1914.

R. February 16, 1914.

Judging from the newspapers and casual conversations it would appear that a state of considerable tension with Russia exists in Vienna at the present moment. Not a word of this is said at the Ballplatz in the course of my occasional interviews with the Minister for Foreign Affairs and one or two Heads of Departments. The idea has however got about that Russia is actively engaged in preparations designed to re-establish her waning influence in the Balkan Peninsula, and to convince the world that she is still the country round which the destinies of the lesser Slav nations revolve. The origin of the prevailing rumours was the simultaneous presence at St. Petersburg of the Crown Prince of Servia and of the Prime Ministers of Servia and Greece. The conversations said to have taken place under the auspices of the Russian Government between these persons and General Dimitriew, Bulgarian Minister at the Russian Court, are held to foreshadow a reconstitution of the Alliance of the Balkan States. Such a coalition could no longer be regarded, as it was in the year 1912, as having been mainly formed for the purpose of liberating the Christian races of Macedonia and Thrace from the Turkish yoke. It could have, under present circumstances, no other aim than that of making a joint attack on the Austrian Empire. Russia would choose the moment for delivering the assault. Her reward, if successful, would be the acquisition of Galicia with its millions of Slav inhabitants, both Poles and Ruthenes. Servia would spread over the kindred Provinces of Bosnia, Herzegovina and Croatia. Bulgaria would obtain the regions recently annexed by Servia and inhabited mainly by Bulgarians. The hostile intentions of Russia are regarded as self-evident. She is calling in her reserves, and even a portion of her "Landsturm." She loses no opportunity of picking quarrels with the Austrian authorities along the Galician frontier. She openly encourages the Ruthenes to revolt against their Austrian and Hungarian masters.

The "Neue Freie Presse" is the most eloquent exponent of these alarmist views. A Balkan League, according to this widely read organ, would be a dagger in the hand of Russia, pointed straight at the heart of Austria. But other leading Vienna papers are hardly less outspoken, and it is clear that a condition of great nervousness prevails.

Having recently had opportunities of hearing the views of the Roumanian, Servian, Bulgarian and Greek Representatives at Vienna, I am led rather to believe that such conversations as have recently taken place between Balkan statesmen at St. Petersburg and Bucharest were concerned with the very intelligible object of arriving at some understanding as regards the maintenance of the arrangements made by the Treaty of Bucharest. Those arrangements are believed to be threatened by Turkey, who openly parades her intention to resist the decision of the Powers in respect of the Islands now held by Greece, and to adopt an attitude regarding that

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King.]

question which would lead, if persisted in, to war with Greece. Bulgaria, it would seem, is not yet to be won over to any friendly understanding with Serbia; but that Serbia and Greece should make up their minds as to joint defensive action in the event of an attack from Turkey alone or Turkey and Bulgaria jointly, would seem to be a very obvious consequence of the present condition of affairs, as also that Roumania should favour such a scheme of co-operation between them. No animus against Austria need be assumed. Indeed, the Balkan States have too recently emerged from a state of war to have any stomach for other than the most unavoidable measures of defence.

This reasoning does not satisfy the alarmists, who continue to maintain that Serbia is and always will be ready to follow Russia in arms against the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The Slav element is regarded by them as ever encroaching on the diminishing area of purely German Austria. It is pointed out that a hundred years ago Prague was entirely German. It is now almost entirely Czech. So district after district of Vienna is said to be in danger of losing its German character by Slav infiltration. A word from Russia could arouse at any moment a dangerous agitation.

In other words, the existing nervousness is caused by apprehension that the divisions between the Balkan States resulting from the second Balkan war may be at any time composed again under Russian influence, and may give place to a Slav block which would be a standing danger to this Monarchy. No effort is spared by the Press to warn Bulgaria against a renewal of friendly relations with Serbia. Such a course, it is pointed out, would amount to the surrender by Bulgaria of the pre-eminent position she has hitherto held in the Peninsula. Indeed her very independence would be lost, for she would thus become a mere satrapy of Russia.

Monsieur Sallabachew, the Bulgarian Minister who has just been recalled from his post at Vienna, told me again, on taking leave a few days ago, that his country is far too much exhausted to engage willingly in hostilities for any purpose. He admits however that hostilities may be forced upon her. Her position, he states, is truly deplorable. Western Thrace contains half a million Turks. How could she hold it if Turkey chose to march in? In that event she would have to choose between fighting Turkey for invading her territories or fighting Roumania for not resisting the Turkish advance. Either alternative would be disastrous. Her only hope of ultimate recovery from her disasters lies in the prospect of an alliance, sooner or later, with Roumania. Strengthened by such an alliance she would be able to look her enemies calmly in the face. The wounds left by her last conflict with Serbia are still too fresh to admit of her thinking seriously of a present reconciliation with that country.

Neither the Servian nor the Greek Representative at Vienna believes in the likelihood of a Turkish advance through Bulgarian territory next spring. They both agree however in apprehending serious Comitaji risings of Albanian and Bulgarian bands in the territories newly annexed to Serbia. The Greek Chargé d'Affaires speaks with contempt of the faith which Turkey seems to place in her future possession of a Dreadnought. A Turkish crew will never be able, in his opinion, to handle such a vessel effectively.

I have, &c.

MAURICE DE BUNSEN.

MINUTE

Turkey this year will have two not one Dreadnought One she built and one she purchased. The alarmist rumours are manufactured.

A. N.
E. G.

No. 347.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 9106/2419/14/7.

(No. 6.)

Bucharest, D. February 13, 1914.

Sir,

R. March 2, 1914.

I have the honour to report that M. Venizelos and M. Pashitch arrived here on the 7th and 9th instant respectively and both left for Belgrade on the 10th instant.

I have the authority of M. Venizelos and of M. Porumbaru, the Roumanian Minister for Foreign Affairs, for it that no fresh engagement was signed by Roumania during the visit of the two Prime Ministers.⁽²⁾

In my telegrams Nos. 1 and 3⁽³⁾ I have ventured to express my disbelief in the existence of any agreement between Roumania and Greece and Serbia subsequent to that reported in Mr. Colville Barclay's telegram No. 174 of the 15th August last.⁽⁴⁾

It seems to me highly improbable that anything of importance should have been signed by the three countries without the knowledge of the Russian Legation, and I am pretty confident that had my Russian Colleague known of any such agreement as those indicated in Mr. Crackanthorpe's telegrams I should not have been left entirely in the dark.⁽⁵⁾

Besides this it seems to me inherently improbable that Roumania should bind herself further at this stage, for while it was quite natural that at the time of the Treaty of Bucharest she should engage herself with her co-belligerents as against Bulgaria to see to that Treaty's execution,—such an undertaking only made formally binding an obligation which she was in any case bound to execute—I much doubt whether King Charles would sanction any new engagement tending still further to estrange Austria, unless there was some more tangible quid pro quo than I can see at present.

I have, &c.

G. BARCLAY.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 303, No. 339, and *notes* ⁽⁴⁾ and ⁽⁵⁾.]

⁽³⁾ [Sir G. Barclay's telegrams (No. 1) of February 2, 1914, D 3 P.M., R. 5.5 P.M., and (No. 3) of February 6, 1914, D. 4.30 P.M., R. 6.45 P.M., are not reproduced as the contents are sufficiently indicated above. (F.O. 4846/2419/14/7. 5533/2419/14/7.)]

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II), p. 986, No. 1240; *cp. also ibid.*, p. 1001, No. 1257.]

⁽⁵⁾ [*cp. M. Arseniev's report of February 10, 1914, Imperialismus*, 1st Ser., Vol. I, pp. 216-7, No. 223.]

No. 348.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Belgrade, February 16, 1914.

F.O. 7063/3507/14/39.

D. 1.30 P.M.

Tel. (No. 25.) Very Confidential.

R. 3.30 P.M.

Head of political department of Servian Foreign Office who accompanied Prime Minister to Bucharest, told me privately last night that scope of the understandings reached at St. Petersburg and Bucharest furnished guarantee for Servia against attack by Austria without the latter country being especially named. In reply to my enquiry whether there was a triple alliance between Servia, Roumania and Greece he said not yet but hinted that the ground was laid and that conclusion of such an alliance would depend on future developments. He added that the Crown Prince of Roumania was inclined to be Austrophobe, and would naturally be a freer agent than the present King. His remark that Austria had not been specially named points

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Paris (as No. 66); to Rome (as No. 42); to St. Petersburg (as No. 93); to Constantinople (as No. 95); to Sofia (as No. 6); to Berlin and Vienna by bag.]

to probability of written agreement of some kind which may not however yet be signed.

He emphasized the fact that Servian policy towards Albania entirely harmonized with Roumanian views.

(Sent to Athens and Bucharest.)

No. 349.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Belgrad, February 20, 1914.

F.O. 7761/2419/14/7.

D. 4.30 P.M.

Tel. (No. 27.) Very Confidential.

R. 9.30 P.M.

St. Petersburg telegram No. 29.⁽²⁾

I learn that, on the Servian Prime Minister's pointing out to Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs impossibility of granting territorial concessions to Bulgaria with a view to reconciliation or of even coming to a lasting understanding with the present Bulgarian Government, M. Sazonof asked the Servian Prime Minister whether, in the event of the abdication of King Ferdinand and the creation of a republic, Servia would be willing to intervene to uphold the monarchical principle and restore order. I am told that the Servian Prime Minister gave an assurance on this point all the more willingly in view of the danger to Servia of the spread of republicanism to this country.

I can obtain no information as to whether the Russian Government have anyone else in view, should King Ferdinand abdicate.

(Sent to Sophia.)

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to St. Petersburg (as No. 101) on February 23.]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, pp 302-3, No. 338.]

No. 350.

Sir H. Bax-Ironside to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 9059/2420/14/7.

(No. 20.) Confidential.

Sofia, D. February 20, 1914.

Sir:—

R. March 2, 1914.

I have the honour to report that I called upon the Prime Minister yesterday, on his return to the capital after his visit to the newly created territorial districts.

His Excellency, who is for the present acting as Minister for Foreign Affairs, stated that he believed that all these districts would return members favourably disposed to the Government cause, and that, as they are forty in number, he expected to have a working majority, even were his party to lose a few seats in Old Bulgaria.

M. Radoslavoff went on to point out the great necessity for Bulgaria's having a Government with a reliable majority, so as to enable the country to pull itself together after the late wars. He stated that, although a Loan was required, and naturally so after the great war expenses so lately incurred, yet, notwithstanding, Bulgaria was in a far better condition financially than Servia, or perhaps even than Greece. The peasants were very thrifty and saving, and the balance at all the Agricultural Banks throughout the country were as large as they had ever been; the depositors in these Banks were all peasants.

Turning then to Foreign Affairs, His Excellency insisted on the absolute necessity to Bulgaria of a peaceful policy, no entangling alliances, or even ententes, which might

lead the country again into difficulties. He and his colleagues fully realized the necessity for a series of quiet years for recuperation and progress.

M. Radoslavoff thus confirmed the statement made to me earlier by the Chef de cabinet, which I had the honour to report in my telegram No. 4 of February 9th.⁽¹⁾

His Excellency blamed M. Daneff for what he termed the total lack of diplomatic tact which he had shown during the negotiations, both in London and Bucarest, and he evidently considers him as largely responsible for the aggressive policy of Bulgaria after the Turkish War. and he is of opinion that M. Daneff will not come to the front for many years to come.

The Prime Minister finally touched lightly on relations between Great Britain and Bulgaria. He stated that the latter had always received much sympathy from the former, and he trusted that that sympathy would not be withdrawn, even if Bulgaria had behaved rashly; they had, he continued, suffered heavily, and were still suffering for any faults they may have committed. Bulgaria was a young country, and therefore more apt to commit faults than a Great Power. M. Radoslavoff concluded by stating that should his party be returned at the General Election he would hope to conclude a Bulgarian Loan with private bankers in London.

His Excellency did not allude to the position of His Majesty the King or to any matter connected with the Court.

The Prime Minister is again shortly leaving the capital to continue his political campaign.

I have, &c.

H. O. BAX-IRONSIDE.

(¹) [*v. supra*, p. 306, No. 343. The telegram is dated February 8, 1914.]

No. 351.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 9078/3507/14/39.

(No. 49.) Very Confidential.

Sir,

Belgrade, D. February 21, 1914.

R. March 2, 1914.

I had some conversation last night with the director of the political Department of the Servian Ministry for Foreign Affairs who accompanied Monsieur Pashitch both to St. Petersburg and to Bucharest. Monsieur Shainovitch is now, since the departure of Monsieur Spalaikovitch to St. Petersburg as Servian Minister, the only prominent member of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs who occasionally becomes communicative, and he spoke yesterday with some freedom as to the general results obtained at the recent conferences.⁽²⁾

He told me, as indeed did Monsieur Pashitch a day or two ago, that the visits to St. Petersburg and Bucharest had been exceedingly satisfactory. He added that had Servia received a year or so ago the assurances which had been now given her in regard to Austria, she might have been tempted to pursue a very different policy. I asked Monsieur Shainovitch whether these assurances were of a specific nature. He replied that Austria had not been specially named but that this was immaterial to the scope of the general understanding arrived at. I then enquired whether a triple alliance had been entered into between Roumania, Servia and Greece. He answered "not yet" but that the ground had been laid and that the conclusion of such an alliance would depend on future developments. He had noticed whilst in Bucharest a pronounced Austrophobe tendency in military circles, and he declared that this tendency was shared by the Crown Prince of Roumania who would naturally be a freer

(¹) [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King.]

(²) [*cp. supra*, pp. 312-3, No. 348.]

agent than the present King. The attitude towards Servia of the present Liberal Government at Bucharest had been a special source of satisfaction to Monsieur Pashitch. Monsieur Shainovitch emphasised the fact that Servia's policy towards Albania entirely harmonized with Roumanian views.

The general impression left by this conversation was that a close understanding of a defensive nature had been entered into between the three Governments, and is very possibly consigned to writing though it may not yet be signed; and further that the scope of this understanding practically guarantees the integrity of Servia within her newly acquired limits. I hear from another source that the Oriental Railway question was discussed both at St. Petersburg and at Bucharest, and that Monsieur Pashitch obtained at both capitals support for the contention of the Servian Government that they must retain the right to buy out the shares, the Roumanian Government being specially anxious that Servia should obtain full control of the line for strategic purposes should circumstances demand it.

It seems probable that the general understanding arrived at between Servia, Roumania and Greece will render Servia inclined to stiffen herself against Austria on the questions at issue between them, but against this must be set the fact that so long as King Charles is on the throne his personal influence on Austro-Servian relations is likely to be a moderating one.

I have, &c.

DAYRELL CRACKANTHORPE.

No. 352.

Sir H. Bax-Ironside to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 9061/2419/14/7.

(No. 22.) Confidential.

Sofia, D. February 24, 1914.

Sir:—

R. March 2, 1914.

I have the honour to report that political relations between Russia and Bulgaria are commencing to show interesting developments.

As stated in my telegram of to-day's date,⁽²⁾ King Ferdinand ordered a Requiem Mass to be said in the Palace on the anniversary of the death of the Grand Duke Vladimir. Such a function had not been held since the death of the Grand Duke, when it was given officially at the Cathedral. The Russian Minister, M. Savinsky, was specially invited, and, when the ceremony was concluded, he had a conversation of over two hours with His Majesty.

I gather from a sure source that the King spoke disparagingly of the members of both the Narodniak and the Danefist parties to M. Savinsky. The latter was, as was natural, extremely surprised, as these parties are the pillars of the Russian cause throughout the country and include the major part of the talent and higher education of Bulgaria, containing as they do such men as MM. Gueshoff, Téodoroff, Madjaroff, and Daneff, all names well known, Sir, to you.

King Ferdinand told the Russian Minister that he was convinced that these parties were actively working for his downfall; and that it would be impossible for him to call either of them to power for a long time to come. He hoped, therefore, that the Russian Government would give their support to the present Coalition Government should they be returned to power after the new elections, as seemed probable to His Majesty.

King Ferdinand further pointed out that the present Government was a coalition one, and that, although M. Radoslavoff, the Prime Minister, had certainly identified

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Prime Minister.]

⁽²⁾ [Sir H. Bax-Ironside's telegram (No. 6) of February 24, 1914, D. 3.30 P.M., R. 4 P.M., is not reproduced as the contents are sufficiently indicated above. (F.O. 8364/2419/14/7.)]

himself with a pro-Austrian policy, the Stambouloffists, who form the other wing of the Coalition, had never done so, but had prided themselves on being a strictly national party.

M. Savinsky is not yet thoroughly acquainted with Balkan politics, and he is impressed with His Majesty's plausibility. In view also of the political changes now going on in St. Petersburg, he is somewhat uncertain as to what course his Government would wish him to adopt.

His Majesty's object in endeavouring to gain over the Russian Government to cast a favourable eye on the present Ministry is twofold. Should they return to office they expect to meet with difficulties in Paris respecting the flotation of a new Loan should the Russian Government oppose it, and secondly, M. Ghénadieff, the present leader of the Stambouloffist party, has the practical control of the Macedonian bands. If he issues the order for these latter to create disturbances throughout Macedonia and Thrace, the present peaceable policy of the Government may be seriously endangered.

The King's action, however, has, in fact, filled Ministers with misgiving; they believe His Majesty to be intriguing against them, with a view to preparing the way for another Government. They consider that, at any rate until the elections are over, no overtures of any description should be made to the Russian Representative, and they mistrust, perhaps erroneously in this case, the King's interference. Ministers are strengthened in this view by the fact that the Exarch has recently addressed an Encyclical to the Bulgarian people against the Roman Catholic religion, and in favour of Orthodoxy, stating, amongst other subjects, that the former religion means oppression, and the latter means liberty. The message ends by praising the great and mighty Russia, the mother of the Slav race.

The Cabinet are aware that M. Savinsky was consulted by the Exarch before the issue of the message, and His Beatitude takes no steps to hide his sympathies for Russia.

I am sending a copy of this despatch to His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople.

I have, &c.

H. O. BAX-IRONSIDE.

No. 353.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 9076/2419/14/7.

(No. 52.) Very Confidential.

Sir,

Belgrade, D. February 26, 1914.

R. March 2, 1914.

In his telegram No. 29 of the 1st instant,⁽²⁾ His Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg reported a conversation with the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs in the course of which His Excellency stated that the Russian Government, far from trying to get rid of King Ferdinand, were giving His Majesty their support, as, were he to go, Bulgaria would become a republic.

An interesting light is thrown on this statement of Monsieur Sazonoff by information which has reached me from a reliable source that on Monsieur Pashitch pointing out to the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs during his recent visit to St. Petersburg the impossibility for Serbia of granting territorial concession to Bulgaria with a view to reconciliation or of coming to a durable understanding

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Prime Minister. A copy was sent to Sofia on March 5.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 302-3, No. 338.]

with Monsieur Radoslavoff's Government, Monsieur Sazonoff indicated the danger which would be incurred by King Ferdinand should the forthcoming elections go against the present Government and should His Majesty be unable to point to any success accruing from his present policy. I am told that Monsieur Sazonoff put it straight to the Servian Prime Minister whether in the event of a revolution in Bulgaria entailing the abdication of King Ferdinand and the establishment of a republic, the Servian Government would be ready, if necessary, to intervene for the purpose of upholding the monarchical principle and restoring order. I am informed that Monsieur Pashitch gave an assurance on this point all the more willingly in view of the danger to this country, where institutions are on a pronouncedly democratic basis, of the establishment of republican ideas in such close proximity.

Though I can obtain no information here as to whether the Russian Government have any prospective candidate in view for the throne of Bulgaria should events entail King Ferdinand's abdication, I believe the view at the Servian Foreign Office to be that the Russian Government are so suspicious of His Majesty's shiftiness that they would in reality welcome his departure.

I have, &c.

DAYRELL CRACKANTHORPE.

MINUTE.

Sir H. Bax-Ironside in a private letter to me⁽³⁾ said that the vast majority of the country were against a Republic—but much in favour of King Ferdinand abdicating in favour of Prince Boris.

A. N.
E. G.

(³) [The reference is to Sir H. Bax-Ironside's private letter to Sir A. Nicolson of February 25, 1914. This letter refers to Sir H. Bax-Ironside's despatch (No. 22) of February 24 (*cp. supra*, pp. 315-6, No. 352) and contains in addition to the statement quoted above a comment on King Ferdinand's continued importance, despite his loss of prestige, owing to his ability to "dismiss any Prime Minister at will." (Carnock MSS., Vol. I of 1914.)]

No. 354.

Sir M. de Bunsen to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 11511/485/14/39.

(No. 50.)

Sir,

Vienna, D. March 12, 1914.

R. March 16, 1914.

Monsieur Jovanovich, Servian Minister, informs me that, after a recent visit to Belgrade, he is again in negotiation with the Austro-Hungarian Government concerning the Oriental Railways question. The Servian Government are not now opposed in principle to the Vitali scheme, which provides for a joint participation of French, Austrian and Servian capital in a scheme for the common management of the railways in question on Servian territory. Before, however, the Austro-Hungarian Government will consent to discuss the scheme, it demands that Servia shall give satisfaction to this country on the following three points:—

1.) The linking up of the Servian and Bosnian systems. Austria demands that the Servian line terminating at Uzica should be prolonged to connect with Vardiste on the Bosnian frontier, and likewise that Mitrovitz should be connected with the Bosnian terminus at Uvaz. Servian exports could there be conveyed by rail across Bosnia and Herzegovina to the Dalmatian terminus at Metkovitz, to which sea-going ships of small size have access up the estuary of the Narenta.

Monsieur Jovanovich states that he is not much attracted by this proposal. Serbia, it is true, desires earnestly an outlet into the Adriatic, but the facilities offered by the port of Metkovitz are entirely inadequate, and even if Austria offered to connect Spalato on the Dalmatian coast with the Bosnian railway system and so with the Servian railways, this arrangement would be far from satisfying Servian commercial aspirations which look rather to an exit for Servian goods on the Albanian coast as promised by the Powers in exchange for the consent of Serbia to withdraw her forces from the Adriatic. Austria is for ever trying to induce Serbia to accept a Dalmatian instead of the promised Albanian port for her trade outlet, and Monsieur Jovanovich is afraid that, once Serbia accepts a Dalmatian exit, she will find that the desired more southerly port on the Albanian coast will never be made accessible to her in the manner contemplated by the Representatives of the Powers in London. Austria will try to persuade her that the Dalmatian port affords a sufficient outlet for Servian goods.

2.) Tariffs. Austria demands that Serbia should agree that all the Servian railways should be governed by the "Convention à Quatre" of the year 1883,⁽¹⁾ which stipulates for equal tariff treatment as regards all the parties to the Convention.

Servia is unwilling to agree to this.

3.) Austria wishes the prospective arrangements concerning the Servian railways to last till 1955, the date on which the Oriental Railways Concession will expire.

Servia is very unwilling to relinquish her claim to be allowed to repurchase the lines for herself after a period of, say, ten years.

Monsieur Jovanovich is not very hopeful of arriving at a settlement which his Government could accept.

I have, &c.

MAURICE DE BUNSEN.

(¹) [*v. Hertzslet: The Map of Europe by Treaty*, Vol. IV, pp. 3127-30.]

No. 355.

Sir H. Bax-Ironside to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 18984/2419/14/7.

(No. 82.) Confidential.

Sir:—

Sofia, D. March 14, 1914.

R. March 30, 1914.

I have the honour to report that the Russian Minister called at the Legation and spoke to me on the general outlook. M. Savinsky told me frankly that his instructions were not to put any difficulties at present in the way of King Ferdinand, and, in fact, to endeavour to get on friendly terms with him. He has already realized, however, that this is not an easy matter, as His Majesty has become very chary of talking to any of the Foreign Representatives since the want of success of the Bulgarian arms in the last war, and His Majesty realizes that any intimacy between himself and the Russian Minister would be very unfavourably regarded by the present pro-Austrian Cabinet.

In my despatch No. 22 of February 24th⁽²⁾ I had the honour to mention that the Russian Minister had had a long private conversation with King Ferdinand a few days previously, but this line of policy has not been continued.

M. Savinsky informed me, under the seal of confidence, that he had asked for, and had received, general instructions as to his line of conduct. This was, at any rate at present, to remain conciliatory, to His Majesty, to be on formal, although strictly correct, terms with the present Government, and to wait upon events. He had also

(¹) [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Prime Minister.]

(²) [*v. supra*, pp. 315-6, No. 352.]

received a private letter from M. Sazonoff in the above sense in addition to the formal instructions, which arrived just prior to the General Election.

M. Savinsky is of opinion that much will depend on the result of the Elections. If the Government majority is weak, as it is now known to be, and the Cabinet is likely to fall of itself, it will not be necessary for the Russian Government to take any action whatever; if, on the other hand, the Government remain in office with a strong majority and the present pro-Austrian policy continues, the situation would have to be reconsidered. The Russian Minister believes that financial interests can always be brought to bear either in favour of obtaining a loan, or otherwise. Further, the Russian Government have a large outstanding claim against the Bulgarian Government for supplies of all sorts forwarded to Bulgaria from Russia during the wars. This also includes fuel, and the claim, which amounts to some millions of roubles, could not be met at present if pressed.

M. Savinsky said further that his Government considered the position in Sofia to be an extremely interesting one, in all respects. The hatred of Bulgaria against Roumania, Greece, and Servia was very bitter, especially against the former. It would be the work of the Russian Government to endeavour to bring Servia and Bulgaria together again when a sufficient time had elapsed to permit of the present animosities cooling.

Since my return I have found a marked difference in the treatment accorded to the Turks throughout the country. There will be about 16 Turkish members in the new Sobranje, of whom some twelve will represent districts from the newly conquered territories.

The population here, speaking generally, hold the Turks in respect for their bravery in the field. The Bulgarians who fought in the war, that is to say all the full able-bodied male population, realize under what great difficulties the Ottoman soldiers fought; constantly short as they were, in the earlier stages of the campaign, of rations and warm clothing. The Bulgarian Commissariat failed before Chatalja, but otherwise it was fully effective, whereas many Turkish prisoners were taken who had had no food for four days, and whose lips were black and swollen from want of water.

The general feeling is that the Treaty of Bucharest cannot stand, and where, it is said, can Bulgaria look for an ally, but in her late enemy, Turkey? I do not believe that any arrangement has, as yet, been come to in this matter, beyond some "pourparlers" between the two Governments, it would appear however, as if events were likely to shape themselves in this direction, as soon as there is an assured Government in this country.

I am sending a copy of this despatch to His Majesty's Ambassador in Constantinople.

I have, &c.

H. O. BAX-IRONSIDE.

No. 356.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.

F.O. 13558/72/14/44.

(No. 7.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 23, 1914.

As the Roumanian Minister had made enquiries about our communication to the Powers on the subject of the Treaty of Berlin,⁽¹⁾ I asked him to come to see me, and I confirmed to him to-day what he had already been told by Sir E. Crowe.

⁽¹⁾ [M. Misu had asked Sir Eyre Crowe on March 14 and March 19 whether the British Government had made proposals to the Powers regarding the recognition of the recent annexations of territory in the Balkan Wars and the application of the Treaty of Berlin. (F.O. 12634/72/14/44. 12389/72/14/44.) *cp. supra*, pp. 287-8, *Ed. note*, and *infra*, pp. 323-4, No. 359.]

He showed me a communication from his Government, indicating that they wished to know whether we had proposed that there should be another International Act other than the Treaty of Berlin, which would involve revision of the Treaties of London and Bukarest.

I said that we had not contemplated another International Act, unless it were a definite recognition on the part of the Powers of the changes made in the Treaty of Berlin by the annexation of territory as a result of the Balkan wars, and a statement that the provisions of the Treaty of Berlin protecting the rights of minorities were not affected by these territorial changes. In any case, whether there were another International Act or not, we had never proposed or contemplated proposing to the Powers any revision of the Treaty of Bukarest. All we wished to have was an understanding between the Powers that, though the Treaty of Berlin had been altered by territorial changes, its provisions with respect to the protection of minorities were still in force. I understood that the Roumanian Government admitted them to be still in force; and, if so, there was no necessity for me to discuss the point with them.

The Minister confirmed this, but said that of course the confirmation of the Treaty of Berlin was a matter between the Great Powers. He added that he understood me to contemplate that it would perhaps be done by an exchange of Notes, as had been the case when Bosnia and Herzegovina were annexed by Austria.

I said that I did not mind about the form: an exchange of Notes would do very well. All I hoped was that there would be some agreement between the Powers that these provisions of the Treaty of Berlin were still in force. As, however, the Roumanian Government had expressed anxiety on the subject, I had thought that it would be more satisfactory if I spoke to the Roumanian Minister personally.

For this he thanked me, and he expressed himself quite satisfied.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

[*ED. NOTE.*—On March 26, 1914, the Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Cetinje reported that King Nicholas of Montenegro had at last ordered that a letter written with his own hand should be handed to King Peter of Serbia arranging for a military, diplomatic, and financial union between the two countries. *v. Imperialismus*, 1st Ser., Vol. II, pp. 90-1, Nos. 97-8; *Siebert-Benckendorff*, III, p. 269, No. 1047. *cp. also Imperialismus*, 1st Ser., Vol. II, pp. 399-401, No. 412; *Siebert-Benckendorff*, III, pp. 274-5, No. 1053; pp. 278-80, No. 1056.]

No. 357.

Sir M. de Bunsen to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 16205/16205/14/37.

(No. 66.)

Sir,

Vienna, D. April 9, 1914.

R. April 14, 1914.

The accusation that Count Berchtold's policy throughout the Balkan wars had resulted in alienating the long-established friendship of Roumania for Austria was a principal indictment against His Excellency during the last sitting of the Delegations. Whether in truth the Roumanian Government has definitely placed itself on the side of Russia it is too soon to be sure. However this may be, the popular sentiment of Roumania is here thought to be manifestly anti-Austrian. The reason generally given is that this country, more perhaps than any other Great Power, finds fault with the territorial arrangements embodied in the Treaty of Bucharest. Serbia, the outpost of Russia, was perhaps abnormally enlarged as the result of those arrangements, at the expense of Bulgaria and Albania, the friends of Austria. Austria therefore pressed for revision of the Treaty, and only abandoned her demand on finding that it received no support in other quarters. This is no doubt well remembered at Bucharest, but it is probable that other causes contribute at least with equal force to the prevailing

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Prime Minister. A copy was sent to Bucharest.]

ill feeling against the Dual Monarchy. Amongst these there is the recollection that, at a time when nationalities tend to coalesce, millions of Roumanians in Transylvania⁽²⁾ are still separated from the Roumanian Crown. That this grievance has not ceased to rankle in the popular mind was shown by the proceedings at a meeting of the League of Culture held at Bucharest on March 29th.⁽³⁾ Nationalist sentiment is said to have been roused to enthusiasm on that occasion by chauvinist speeches clamouring for the invasion of Transylvania. The audience afterwards demonstrated approvingly in front of the Russian Legation. The incident has caused much angry comment in the Austrian press, which called attention also to an article by a well known Russian publicist in the Bucharest "Universal," advocating a Russian alliance with Roumania as a means of securing the reunion of all Roumanians under the national flag. Russia would contribute to this result by giving back the whole of Bessarabia except its northern and southern extremities.

Mr. Max Müller has related in his reports from Buda Pesth the efforts which the Hungarian Premier has recently made to satisfy as far as possible the aspirations of the Transylvanian Roumanians. They have unfortunately led as yet to no practical result, and it is not known here whether Count Tisza intends to return to the charge. I am assured, from a quarter usually well informed, that pressure has been brought to bear upon him in order to induce him to do so, as the result of a conversation which the Crown Prince of Roumania held with the German Emperor at Berlin, when the former recently passed through that Capital on his way to St. Petersburg.⁽⁴⁾ The Crown Prince is said to have assured His Majesty that Roumania desired to hold fast to her long-standing friendship with the Triple Alliance Powers, but added that her efforts in this direction would be greatly assisted if a word could be said from Berlin to Count Tisza to induce him again to seek a settlement with the Hungarian Roumanians. My informant states that the German Emperor accordingly took the opportunity of an interview he had with Count Tisza at Schonbrunn on his way to Corfu to urge His Excellency to take the matter again into consideration and to endeavour to find a way of satisfying the Roumanian demand.

Count Tisza has since declared in the Chamber at Buda Pesth that it would be a mistake to attribute importance to irresponsible speeches made at a public meeting and that it had not been thought necessary to make any diplomatic protest at Bucharest. Whether he will see his way to resuming the interrupted negotiations remains to be seen. In Austria it is certainly desired that no stone should be left unturned in the effort to recover the lost influence of the Dual Monarchy in Roumania.

I have, &c.

MAURICE DE BUNSEN.

⁽²⁾ [Unsigned marginal comment: "About 3 millions."]

⁽³⁾ [Marginal comment by Mr. Clerk: "Sir G. Barclay minimized the importance of this gathering." [G. R. C.]]

⁽⁴⁾ [*cp. G.P., XXXIX, pp. 333-4, and note.*]

No. 358.

Sir M. de Bunsen to Sir A. Nicolson.⁽¹⁾

Private.⁽²⁾

My dear Nicolson,

Vienna, April 24, 1914.

. . . .⁽³⁾ Meanwhile Berchtold has returned from the Abbazia interview and is preparing to migrate to Budapest, where, except for occasional visits to Vienna, he will

⁽¹⁾ [This letter is endorsed in Sir Edward Grey's hand as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe; to Lord Morley.]

⁽²⁾ [Carnock MSS., Vol. III of 1914.]

⁽³⁾ [The opening paragraphs refer to the health of the Emperor Franz Josef, and to the unpopularity of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Hungary]

probably remain (all going well at Schönbrunn) till the end of May. So we shall soon have a plethora of speeches on Foreign Affairs. No doubt it will be repeated *ad nauseam* that the Triple Alliance is stronger than ever and that Austria is in complete agreement with her Allies. It is probably quite true that she sees eye to eye with Italy in the fundamental question of keeping back the Slavs from the Adriatic. That is what Albania is there for, and hence the great importance of the Albanian question, and the insistence of Austria on the policy of keeping the Balkans divided into equally balanced groups—a reconstituted Balkan League would fill her with apprehension. I had a long talk a few days ago with Jovanovitch the Servian Minister. He is a believer in the break up of the Dual Monarchy, which would give the Servians their opportunity. To prepare for this contingency, he thinks Serbia must assimilate as fast as she can the Bulgaro-Macedonian elements which form the bulk of the population in her annexed territories south of Uskub; and then conciliate Bulgaria by a rectification of the frontier. By that time he supposes Serbia and Montenegro will have coalesced. The Balkan Slavs would thus form a compact mass, capable of holding its own against Austria-Hungary, and demanding access to the Adriatic across Albania, if Albania lasts so long. Germany, he thinks, will swallow up the German part of Austria and extend her power to Trieste. The only way of preventing such a consummation would be, in his opinion, for Austria to make common cause with the Slavs and thus to present an insuperable barrier to the German advance Southwards.

However all this may be, I think it is clear that Serbia only accepts the arrangements made by the peace of Bucharest as an instalment, and that she will not be satisfied till she gets to the sea. The Montenegrin coast, even if the two countries were united, does not afford the necessary facilities, owing to the difficulty of taking a railway over the mountains. All this would tend to show that Albania will have a very restless neighbour to the East. We know already that she is threatened both from the North and from the South.

From all I hear in Vienna, the most imminent danger overhanging the Balkans is still that of a war between Turkey and Greece. My friend Hilmi Pasha still discourses in the same vein. Unless Greece will come to terms with Turkey concerning Chios and Mitylene, Turkey will seize the first convenient opportunity to make trouble. This, he says, is why the Ottoman Government was so anxious to get the Powers to soften down the expressions in the draft note to the Greek Government. Greece, he explains, will otherwise be encouraged to insist on the distribution of the Islands made by the Powers. She would be stiffened against any compromise with Turkey. Hilmi cannot understand why the Entente Powers do not strongly press Greece to take the Dodecanese in exchange for the two northerly Islands. Such an exchange, he repeats, is the only way of keeping Italy permanently out of the Aegean. If Turkey gets the Dodecanese, Italy will pick a quarrel with her, whenever she chooses, and reoccupy that group of Islands, never to leave it again. This is Hilmi's perpetual theme and I hear from Dumaine that the new Greek Minister (Gryparis) is rather impressed by it. I find it difficult, myself, to believe that Italy would consent to close the door permanently against herself by acquiescing in Greece getting the Dodecanese. Meanwhile Italy is still there and Turkey is in no hurry to take over the Islands.

There is great joy in the Austrian Press over the non-conversion of the Anglo-French Entente into anything like an alliance with France. C[oun]t Berchtold remarked to me last night that the British refusal to bind herself by an alliance was the best possible guarantee of peace. I said that, if we *had* adopted the policy of an alliance, which we have not, it would have been because we sh[oul]d then have thought that peace could be better preserved by an Alliance than by an Entente; it w[oul]d not have been in an aggressive sense. He replied that nevertheless it w[oul]d have sharpened existing contrasts and removed the existing confidence among the other Powers that England, by reserving her independence of action, will continue, as she did throughout the Balkan crisis, to act in moments of crisis as

mediator between the rival groups. No other Power could replace her in this role which she had played with acknowledged success.

Y[our]s ever,
MAURICE DE BUNSEN.

No. 359.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 14331/72/14/44.

(No. 259.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, May 6, 1914.

I have now received from the five Powers their replies to the enquiry which I

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requested Your Excellency, in my telegram No. 3 of January 9th⁽²⁾ last, to make as

to their views on the status of the annexed territories in the Balkans in respect of the Capitulations and the position of religious minorities.

The French Government are of opinion that the Balkan States, who accepted the Treaty of Berlin in 1878, and carried out and profited by its terms, are bound by its stipulations. The French Government also hold that the Powers would be justified in making their recognition of the recent territorial changes contingent upon an undertaking by the annexing States to respect those provisions of the Treaty which guarantee the rights of religious minorities. They agree, moreover, with the view of His Majesty's Government that such formal recognition will in itself abolish the Capitulations.

The German Government entirely share the view of His Majesty's Government as expressed in my telegram referred to above, and, while considering that the question whether the provisions of the Treaty of Berlin in regard to minorities retain their validity in the annexed territories is, from the juridical point of view, an open one, are inclined to answer it in the affirmative.

The Russian Government consider the Great Powers, having formally intervened in the Treaty of London of May 30th, 1913, have thereby recognized the cession, under Article II, of the Treaty,⁽³⁾ of territories by the Sultan to the Balkan States. They are opposed to a further pronouncement on the rights of minorities, as likely to hinder the work of pacification in the Balkans, and they hold that the Capitulations have ceased to exist in the newly-acquired territories by the mere fact of their annexation.

The view of the Italian Government is that the regularisation of the present Balkan situation requires the sanction of the Powers; but that such sanction need not be expressed in a collective form, to which they are themselves opposed; and they intend to give their own sanction independently of the other Powers.

They regard the Capitulations as "*ipso facto*" abolished by the annexation of Turkish territory by a Christian State, once such annexation has been recognized; while they think that the protection of minorities is already partly guaranteed by Article 8 of the Treaty of Constantinople and Article 2 of the Treaty of Athens, but would approve a specific assurance from the Balkan States to the populations interested, and would join with His Majesty's Government in taking steps to this end.

The Austro-Hungarian Government appear to think that annexation does not, as

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch was repeated to Berlin (No. 126); to Rome (No. 122); to Vienna (No. 67); to St. Petersburg (No. 164); *mutatis mutandis*.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp. 292-3, *Ed. note*.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II), p. 1050, *App. III*.]

a legal question, entirely suppress the Capitulations, but that, as a general principle, it must be held that they are extinguished by the annexation of Turkish territory to a Christian State. As regards the rights of minorities, the Austro-Hungarian Government seemingly hold that the provisions of the Treaty of Berlin continue to apply to the annexed territories, but they are reluctant to give their public assent to any view which might call in question the full validity of the distribution of territory made by the Treaty of Bucharest.

From the above brief summaries of the views of the Powers it is clear that there is no prospect of agreement, within reasonable time as to the procedure to be adopted in dealing with the question.

I have therefore to request that Your Excellency will inform the Government to which you are accredited that, in these circumstances, His Majesty's Government consider that they must act on their own view, which appears to them free from ambiguity and strictly correct; that is, they will inform the Governments of Greece, Roumania, Servia, Bulgaria, and Montenegro that His Majesty's Government, so far as they themselves are concerned, are willing to recognise the recent annexations of territory to the respective States, in so far as these annexations constitute a departure from the settlement sanctioned by the Treaty of Berlin and subsequent international agreements between the Powers signatories of that treaty, provided that the respective annexing States on their part acknowledge the binding force, in respect of the annexed territories, of those provisions of the Treaty of Berlin which ensure the equal rights of religious or national minorities. The recognition of the annexations will imply, so far as H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] are concerned, the termination of the system of Capitulations.

To Paris and Berlin only.

Y[our] E[xcellency] should add that H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] fully appreciate the fact that the French Gov[ernment] share their opinion on this question, as reported in Mr. Grahame's despatch No. $\frac{99}{140}$ ⁽⁴⁾ of this year, but they feel that, as it is useless to hope for general agreement, it is better that each Power should express its recognition of the annexations independently. H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] trust however that the French Gov[ernment] will, in their communications to the Balkan States, make it clear that they uphold the point of view, with which they have already expressed agreement.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

(4) [Not reproduced. Mr. Grahame's despatch (No. 99), D. February 15, R. February 16, 1914, (F.O. 6907/72/14/44), enclosed the text of M. Doumergue's reply to Sir Edward Grey's communication of January 9 (*v. supra*, pp 292-3, *Ed. note*). Sir E. Goschen's despatch (No. 140), D. March 31, R. April 2, 1914, (F.O. 14617/72/14/44), similarly enclosed the text of Herr von Jagow's reply. The text of the Russian reply was sent as an enclosure in Sir G. Buchanan's despatch (No. 53), D. February 27, R. March 2, 1914, (F.O. 9145/72/14/44); that of Italy in Sir R. Rodd's despatch (No. 122), D. April 4, R. April 9, 1914, (F.O. 15688/72/14/44); that of Austria-Hungary in Sir M. de Bunsen's despatch (No. 61), D. March 29, R. April 1, 1914, (F.O. 14331/72/14/44). The contents of these communications are summarized above.]

No. 360.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir H. Bax-Ironside.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 20537/20537/14/7.

Tel. (No. 11.)

Foreign Office, May 9, 1914, 2 P.M.

Russian Gov[ernmen]t are anxious that you should support your French and Russian colleagues in dissuading Bulgarian Gov[ernmen]t from contracting a loan with German syndicate, which they fear may lead to financial dependency of Bulgaria on German and Austro-Hungarian firms.

Have you any information resp[ectin]g such negotiations?

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram resulted from Sir A. Nicolson's report of his interview with M. de Etter on May 7, 1914. (F.O. 20537/20537/14/7.) Sir Edward Grey minuted this report as follows: "We can enquire of Sir H. Bax Ironside as proposed, but we cannot really do anything. The Bulgarians will ask us to get them money in London and we cannot do that as British finance is not influenced by political motives"

Count Benckendorff saw me himself this afternoon but said nothing on this subject E. G. 7.5.14."']

No. 361.

Sir H. Bax-Ironside to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 21004/20537/14/7.

Sofia, D. May 10, 1914.

Tel. (No. 11.)

R. May 11, 1914.

Your telegram No. 11 of 9th May.⁽²⁾

The Bulgarian Government have been negotiating for a considerable time respecting a foreign loan, which they now urgently require.

The present Cabinet is not only pro-Austrian, but also violently anti-Russian (see my telegram No. 291 of last year),⁽³⁾ and they much prefer to borrow if possible from the Triple Alliance. They made half-hearted efforts to raise loan in Paris, but owing to Russian influence their efforts were unsuccessful. Russian policy has been hitherto to oppose a Bulgarian loan in Paris in the belief that they would be unable to procure one from the Triple Alliance. Now that the Government are on the point of concluding a loan with a German syndicate, my Russian and French colleagues have been making every effort to dissuade them, but quite in vain.

I hear that the Disconto-Gesellschaft have offered 500,000,000 [fr.], issue price 83 at 5 per cent., half to be paid at once and the other half in two years' time. The Government require the remainder within eight months, but will probably cede this point. Amongst the conditions demanded by German banks are a tobacco monopoly, which will seriously affect British, French, and American interests, construction of Porto Lagos Railway, and future orders for German armaments to the amount of 50,000,000 fr.

German conditions are so onerous that there is just a chance of the loan project being thrown out in the Sobranjé.

Further telegram follows.⁽⁴⁾

⁽¹⁾ [The text given above is taken from the copy in the *Confidential Print*, as the original decipher cannot be traced.]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

⁽³⁾ [Sir H. Bax-Ironside's telegram (No. 291) of July 18, 1913, D. 1-10 A.M., R. 10-30 A.M., announced the formation of a new Bulgarian Ministry with strong anti-Russian views and unfavourable to Triple *Entente*. (F.O. 33087/30600/13/44.)]

⁽⁴⁾ [v. immediately succeeding document.]

No. 362.

Sir H. Bax-Ironside to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 21055/20537/14/7.

Tel. (No. 12.) Confidential.

Sofia, May 11, 1914.

My immediately preceding telegram of yesterday.⁽²⁾

My French colleague, who leaves for Paris to-night, informs me that he has exhausted all his efforts unofficially to persuade Bulgarian Government not to conclude loan with Germany, and he sees no prospect whatever of their giving way. He has also spoken unofficially to the "chef de cabinet" on the subject, pointing out that Bulgaria is already largely indebted to France and should therefore continue to borrow from her. His remarks were received in silence. He added that in future Bulgaria would most probably find herself cut off from the Paris market. French Minister does not believe that any efforts on my part will have any effect. In so far as this Government is concerned I entirely agree with him. Should Government fall, which would happen if loan project were rejected in the Sobranjé, the Democrats would most likely come in, and they would at once apply for a loan in Paris.

My Russian colleague, however, would like me to speak to the "chef de cabinet," particularly on political aspect of the loan. He has just returned from the Palace, and believes that my aid would be of use.

Do you approve my speaking unofficially?⁽³⁾

(1) [The text given above is taken from the copy in the *Confidential Print*, as the original decypher cannot be traced.]

(2) [v. immediately preceding document.]

(3) [v. *infra*, p. 327, No. 364.]

No. 363.

Count de Salis to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 21748/10577/14/27.

(No. 28.)

Cettinje, D. May 11, 1914.

Sir,

R. May 15, 1914.

In the course of last March reports were circulated in the Italian and Austrian press that negotiations had been in progress between King Nicolas and the Austrian Government for a rectification of frontier in the mountainous region immediately behind the town of Cattaro. On the 31st of March the *Fremdenblatt* published a sweeping denial that anything of the kind had taken place. Some days later an article appeared in the *Tribuna* which, from a translation or summary published by the *Vjesnik*, was to the following effect;—

The Lovtchen question is important for Italy. Even if there are *démentis*, we are not certain that the Austrian Government will not continue to consider proposals for the taking of Lovtchen. . . .⁽²⁾ It is necessary that our position should be clear in this question and that Austria should understand that in this matter she will have to do with Italy rather than with Montenegro or Servia. Lovtchen dominates Cettinje and the Bocche, so that if out of Cattaro Austria makes a strong naval harbour of the first class, threatening that equilibrium of the Adriatic which is the chief basis of our alliance with Austria and of our friendship with her, our understanding with Austria about Albania will be disturbed. In such circumstances Italy would sacrifice an alliance and a friendship which Austria, by taking Lovtchen, would render impossible.

(1) [A copy of this despatch was sent to the Director of Military Operations.]

(2) [Thus in original.]

In the earlier days of this month the Temps published what purports to be an explanation of what has occurred: The Austrian Military authorities have, it is alleged, entered into negotiation with the Montenegrin Government through Major Hubka, the Military Attaché at Cetinje, without consulting Count Berchtold, whose hand has thus been forced, and Major Hubka is to be shortly recalled. The French Minister has put some direct questions on the subject to Monsieur Plamenatz, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and to Monsieur Otto, the Austrian Minister, and has been assured by each of them that there is no truth whatever in the story. It may be remarked that when rumours on the same subject were circulated in November, 1912,⁽³⁾ a categorical denial of the same nature was equally opposed to any inquiries. At that time negotiations undoubtedly took place between the King and Baron Giesl, the Austrian Minister, since the German Minister who was present at an interview subsequently related to one of his colleagues what had occurred. In the course of conversation not long ago the King alluded to the matter, adding that the Austrians had been approaching him on the subject for the last seven or eight years; he seemed desirous of conveying the impression that he had never listened to them.

That the Austrian military authorities should have acted in this way would not appear to be out of the question. In the course of March last a position at Sjenokos near Metalka on the frontier of the Sanjak was seized by the Austrian troops, without apparently previous negotiation or discussion by any diplomatic channel. The matter has not yet been settled and has proved, it is understood, a source of no small embarrassment to the Austrian Legation, as the Montenegrins would appear to have a strong case. Herewith is enclosed the explanations given on the subject to the Skupshtina by the Montenegrin Minister for Foreign Affairs.⁽⁴⁾ Nothing has so far been done and at least one Servian newspaper has openly attacked the King for allowing the matter to be hushed up in consideration of receiving some secret advantage for his personal benefit.

I have, &c.

J. DE SALIS.

⁽³⁾ [*cp. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II), p. 200, No. 269; p. 356, No. 452; p. 416, No. 514.]

⁽⁴⁾ [Not reproduced.]

No. 364.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir H. Bax-Ironside.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 21055/20537/14/7.

Tel. (No. 12.)

Foreign Office, May 12, 1914, 5.40 P.M.

Your telegram No. 12.⁽¹⁾

In view of the French Min[iste]r's statement I think intervention of H[is] M[ajesty's] Gov[ernment] would serve no purpose. You should therefore not mention the matter to the Bulgarian Gov[ernment] but if the Min[iste]r for For[eign] Aff[airs] speaks to you you may express the opinion that the loan appears to be on very onerous terms and that the Bulgarian Gov[ernment] are shutting themselves off from the Paris market on which in the long run they will have to rely.

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 326, No. 362.]

No. 365.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾*St. Petersburg, May 17, 1914*

F.O. 21987/12682/14/44.

D. 5.5 P.M.

Tel. (No. 114.)

R. 8.45 P.M.

Minister for Foreign Affairs told me yesterday that he had carried away the best impression of his conversations with Talaat Bey. The latter had expressed desire for friendly understanding with Russia, saying that, while other Powers could inflict local wounds only, Russia alone could strike a blow at her heart. It was therefore to her interest to cultivate the best possible relations with Russia.

Minister for Foreign Affairs had reciprocated this wish. The liquidation of the Balkan question had removed the one cause of difference between them. Turkey could count upon Russia's friendship, provided that she remained mistress in her own house and did not allow any other Power to share with her the control of the Straits. Russia wanted to see Turkey for the Turks, but could not tolerate any foreign Power acquiring a privileged position. His Excellency also expressed the hope that the Turkish Government would treat the Armenians in a just and friendly spirit, and said he had much appreciated manner in which they had settled the Bitlis incident.

Talaat gave him satisfactory assurances on all these points, and said that German military mission would not be allowed to exceed functions assigned to them which were of a purely technical character.

MINUTE.

This is very satisfactory.

E. A. C.
May 18.
A. N.
E. G.

(1) [This telegram was sent to Constantinople (as No. 228); to Paris by bag on May 18]

No. 366.

Sir H. Bax-Ironside to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 23183/20537/14/7.

(No. 49.) Confidential.

Sofia, D. May 20, 1914.

Sir:—

R. May 25, 1914.

I have the honour to report that the Bulgarian Government have for some time been negotiating with bankers and Financial Syndicates of different nationalities respecting a loan, of which the country stands in somewhat pressing need. Agents of French, German, Austrian, British, and even, I am informed, of American banks have been in communication with the Bulgarian Minister of Finance on the subject, but without any definite result.

The Government some three months ago approached the French financial market, but their project was coldly received. It was then realized that Russian influence was being exerted to oppose their procuring a loan on the Paris market. The reason for this policy was, that the Russian Government were, and still are, anxious for the downfall of the present pro-Austrian Cabinet. They had made up their minds that Bulgaria would fail to obtain a loan elsewhere than in the French market, and that they would eventually have to come on their knees to them for the money. A "sine qua non" for the flotation of a loan in Paris would have been the fall of the present Cabinet.

The views of the Russian Government, and of the Russian Minister, have turned out to be mistaken, and a loan is on the point of being concluded with a large German Syndicate, at the head of which is the "Disconto Gesellschaft." The conditions made by the German and Austrian firms interested in the loan are doubtless onerous, but money must be obtained at once, to meet several absolutely pressing creditors.

Only quite recently, M. Savinsky took fright at the progress the negotiations were making, and promptly executed a "volte face." He interviewed both the Prime Minister, M. Radoslavoff, and the Finance Minister, M. Toncheff, but without effect. He then called on M. Dobrovitch, the Chef de Cabinet. At this time the conditions demanded by the firms interested in the loan were not yet known. The Russian Minister therefore could only confine himself to urging M. Dobrovitch to persuade the King to dismiss M. Radoslavoff, and to appoint another Prime Minister,—M. Savinsky named M. Malinoff, the Head of the Democratic Party—as his successor, in which case the Russian Minister presumed that his Government would make arrangements in Paris for a satisfactory loan, and an immediate advance, sufficient to meet all pressing needs. Unfortunately at this juncture M. Savinsky absented himself from the capital on a motor tour, which was extended to a week. On his return, on the 8th instant, he found that the negotiations had assumed a more definite shape. The Bulgarian Government had raised their demand from three hundred to five hundred million francs, and the Syndicate had agreed to an immediate advance of two hundred and fifty millions at 5%, issue price 88, and to a further advance of two hundred and fifty millions in two years' time. The Government require the remainder in eight months, and at the time of writing negotiations are still going on respecting this point. The conditions, as far as I am aware, are so onerous that they may be said to take on a political aspect. They include, I am informed, the construction of a new railway from Haskovo to Porto Lagos, which is to be the chief Bulgarian port on the Ægean Sea, this railway to be constructed throughout of German materials, and to be under constant German supervision, and a practical tobacco monopoly in the newly annexed territories, which would appear largely to affect the interests of British and American Companies. They also require an undertaking that orders for armaments to the amount of two million pounds sterling be given to German firms. There is also a further condition that two million pounds be deducted from the loan to pay for armaments already ordered from Messrs. Krupp and other firms. There may be other conditions, of which I am not as yet aware.

On hearing of the above, M. Savinsky again called on the Chef de Cabinet, and pointed out the serious aspect of affairs, even going so far, he tells me, as to say that Bulgaria was selling herself to the Triple Alliance. Meanwhile he had all along been urging my French colleague to point out the seriousness of the question, both to the Chef de Cabinet and to the Finance Minister. As I had the honour to state, however, in my telegram No. 12 of the 11th instant,⁽¹⁾ Monsieur de Panafieu informed me that he had exhausted all his efforts in vain.

At the same time my Russian colleague asked me to approach M. Dobrovitch on the matter. I replied that I could not act thus without your consent, but that I would ask for permission to speak unofficially, if he really believed that any such action on my part would be efficacious. He called on me on the morning of the 11th, and informed me that he had had an interview with M. Dobrovitch on Sunday, the 10th. My Russian colleague now believed that the only way of preventing the loan from being carried through would be either by an immediate change of Cabinet or by the project being thrown out by the Sobranje. As regards the former, the matter lay entirely in the hands of the King, and he had endeavoured to work on His Majesty through M. Dobrovitch. M. Savinsky said that he would like me if possible to speak to M. Dobrovitch in the same sense, so as to show the solidarity of the Entente.

On the 14th instant, being the Reception Day of the Prime Minister, M. Radoslavoff, who is also acting as Minister for Foreign Affairs, I called on His

(1) [v. *supra*, p. 326, No. 362.]

Excellency to discuss several current questions. On my referring to the hardship suffered by certain British Companies owing to the refusal of the Bulgarian Government to permit the export of non-manipulated tobacco (cf. my despatch No. 43 of May 2),⁽²⁾ the Prime Minister touched on the subject of the loan, mentioning that the terms demanded by the German Syndicate respecting the export of tobacco were very onerous. I took the opportunity of speaking to M. Radoslavoff in the sense of your telegram No. 12 of the 13th instant.⁽³⁾ On my mentioning that I had heard that the terms of the German loan were somewhat onerous, he stated that they were acceptable to him, except in so far as the tobacco question was concerned. He would, however, he frankly stated, endeavour to come to an arrangement with the German Syndicate, as he had found both the French and English markets just now unfavourable. He did not, however, intend to sell his country for a loan of fifteen million pounds.

At the time of writing I gather that negotiations are still proceeding, but so far without any definite result.

I have, &c.

H. O. BAX-IRONSIDE.

MINUTES.

Since this was written, a tel[egram] has been rec[eive]d from Sir H. Bax-Ironside⁽⁴⁾ which would tend to indicate difficulties in the way of the conclusion of the German loan owing to Chamber opposition to the tobacco monopoly in the annexed territories.

A. N.

M. Savinsky miscalculated badly and misled his Gov[ernmen]t: and finding that he had done so and that instead of cornering the Bulgarian Gov[ernmen]t, his policy had driven them to Germany, he has been trying to make out that his failure is due to want of support from Sir H. Bax-Ironside or at any rate has been trying to get us to extricate him from the results of his own miscalculation. We can now leave the thing alone.

E. G.

29.5.14.

⁽²⁾ [Sir H. Bax-Ironside's despatch (No. 43), D. May 2, R. May 5, 1914, is not reproduced as the contents are sufficiently indicated above. (F.O. 19898/19898/14/107)]

⁽³⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 327, No. 364. It is dated May 12.]

⁽⁴⁾ [Sir H. Bax-Ironside's telegram (No. 16) of May 29, 1914, is not reproduced as the contents are sufficiently indicated above. (F.O. 24087/20537/14/7.)]

No. 367.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 23815/16205/13/37.

(No. 33.)

Sir,

Bucharest, D. May 20, 1914.

R. May 28, 1914.

The coolness which marked the relations between this country and Austria-Hungary last year has, during the past few months rather increased than diminished. For this, the breakdown of Count Tisza's negotiations with the Roumans of Transylvania, reported in Mr. Max Müller's despatch No. 13 of the 26th March last,⁽²⁾ is perhaps primarily responsible. Count Ottokar Czernin, who succeeded Prince Fürstenberg as Austrian Minister last December, was sent here in the hope that he would prove a persona grata to the Roumanians and succeed in recovering for Austria

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Prime Minister.]

⁽²⁾ [Mr. Max Müller's despatch (No. 13), D. March 26, R. April 14, 1914, gave details of Count Tisza's statement in the House of Deputies at Budapest on February 20. (F.O. 16312/16312/14/3A.)]

the position in this country which she had forfeited through her clumsy handling of the Balkan crisis. As an intimate friend of the Archduke Ferdinand his appointment here seemed likely to prove flattering to the Roumanians and it was hoped that his known sympathy with the Roumains in Transylvania would give him an especially favourable position here. He signalized the early days of the tenure of his Post by granting an interview to a correspondent of an Austrian paper, in which he used words to the effect that the relations between the two countries would not improve until the Roumains in Transylvania received better treatment. This interview, while it was severely commented on by the Press in Austria and Hungary, was calculated to encourage the hope here that Count Tisza's negotiations with the Roumains would lead to some tangible result and there was consequently a good deal of disappointment when they broke down. Since then Count Czernin, in conspicuous contrast to M. Poklewski, the new Russian Minister who is already much liked in Bucharest, has failed to make himself popular and there has even been talk in certain papers of his having failed in his mission and of his approaching recall. . . .⁽³⁾

The Government here have throughout done their best to smother the ill-feeling which has now prevailed for so long. In M. Maioresco's last speech in Parliament before the resignation of the late Cabinet, he made an earnest, but somewhat unconvincing, attempt to defend Austria's attitude towards Roumania during the crisis of last year: and, probably at the direction of the Government, the Bucharest Press has for the most part passed over with little comment the sources of friction mentioned above. On the other hand the Government Organs have laid special stress on a concession made a week or two ago to the Roumains of Transylvania, who are now allowed the use of their native tongue for religious teaching in the primary schools. But the Government's efforts to whitewash Austria are of little avail and the feeling in the country against her is practically universal.

This state of things is of course welcome to my Russian Colleague, but its bearing on the general international situation can easily be exaggerated. Whether or not there exists, as the Russians suspect, a defensive arrangement between Austria and Roumania directed against attack from Russia, Austria in any case has still a valuable asset in King Charles's friendship for the Emperor Francis Joseph and a still more valuable one in the excellent relations which exist between Germany and Roumania, and in this latter connexion I would draw attention to the contrast between the tactless form of Count Berchtold's recent reference to Roumania mentioned above and Herr von Jagow's allusions to this country in his speech in the Reichstag the other day on the Foreign Office Budget. Herr von Jagow, while expressing his confidence that Roumania would lean on "old friends," working with them for the maintenance of the peace re-established by the decisions of Bucharest and London, referred in particularly flattering terms to the wisdom of King Charles and his Government and to the services which Roumania had rendered Europe last year by her attitude of moderation and conciliation in the Balkan crisis. His praise is warmly appreciated here and is significant of the friendship which continues to mark the relations between Germany and Roumania. Indeed German influence in Roumania is as strong as ever today and while this lasts, whatever may be the feeling in the country towards Austria, and notwithstanding the present cordial relations of this country with Russia, I think that to speak of Roumania as having detached herself from the Triple Alliance and as having gone over to the Triple Entente (see Sir F. Bertie's despatch No. 172 of the 30th March)⁽⁴⁾ hardly fits the case.

I have, &c.
G. BARCLAY.

⁽³⁾ [The omitted paragraph deals with irrelevant minor incidents.]

⁽⁴⁾ [Sir F. Bertie's despatch (No. 172), D. March 30, R. April 1, 1914, enclosed an article from *Le Temps* dealing with this subject. (F.O. 14306/4845/14/37.)]

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 23138/23138/14/37.

Tel. (No. 8.) Most Confidential.

Bucharest, May 24, 1914.

I gather from my Russian colleague that he is reporting to his Government his opinion that it would be desirable that I should identify myself more actively than I have hitherto done with the other representatives of the Triple *Entente*. He seems to think that my inactivity here tells against the chances of detaching Roumania from the Triple Alliance, solidarity of which is more evident to Roumania than that of Triple *Entente*, my inactivity here being, he fears, evidence of lukewarmness on the part of one of the members of the latter group.

While conducting myself in a manner to leave no doubt that I am in Triple *Entente* camp, I have carefully refrained from any language or action indicating that I was trying to sway Roumania to one or the other side, and it is probably due to my passivity last year as contrasted with activity of my French and my Russian colleagues that in Triple Alliance press endeavours to detach Roumania from Triple Alliance have been generally spoken of as those of France and Russia and not of Triple *Entente*. This my Russian colleague thinks harmful,⁽²⁾ because in choice between Triple Alliance and Triple *Entente* Roumanians would naturally prefer what seems to them really a three-Power group to one which they are led to believe is virtually only a two-Power group.

I do not think my Russian colleague has any definite action immediately in view, as he sees that things are going of themselves as well as can be expected for Russia, and that active *haute politique* in Bucharest would hardly help matters at the present stage, and I only report Russian Minister's views in case you should hear something of them from St. Petersburg.

What my Russian colleague is especially anxious about is lest one of the Triple *Entente* Powers should raise Jewish question. This would of course harm Triple *Entente's* cause here.

Minister for Foreign Affairs in course of conversation with me a few days ago suggested that your interest in rights of minorities (see your despatch No. 7)⁽³⁾ might be possibly connected with Jewish question, though when I asked him whether he would wish me to enquire he replied in the negative.

(1) [The text given above is taken from the copy in the *Confidential Print*, as the original decypher cannot be traced.]

(2) [*cp.* immediately succeeding document, and *note* (2).]

(3) [*v. supra*, pp. 319-20, No. 356.]

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 23138/23138/14/37.

(No. 21.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, June 2, 1914.

In continuation of my telegram to you No. 5 of the 25 ultimo⁽²⁾ respecting the desire attributed by you to your Russian colleague that you should co-operate more actively with the R[ep]R[esentatives] of the Triple *Entente* in Bukarest, I am of opinion that, judging by what you report, your attitude seems to have hitherto been

(1) [This despatch is based on a minute by Sir Edward Grey on the immediately preceding document.]

(2) [Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 5) of May 25, 1914, D. 7.30 p.m., stated that he was "certainly not aware of any reasonable ground for complaint of your attitude." (F.O. 23138/23138/14/37.)]

all that can reasonably be required. You should give a general support to your French and Russian colleagues, but I do not regard it as necessary that you should assume a very prominent or active part at Bukarest. If any question arises in which it may be desirable to take decided action, you should refer to me for more definite instructions.

As regards the rights of minorities, the interest of H[is] M[ajesty's] Gov[ernment] in the question extends to all contemplated by the Treaty of Berlin, including the Jews in Rumania, but the most pressing aspect of the matter is, at present, the treatment of Mussulmans and other minorities in the territories recently annexed.

[I am, &c.
F. GREY.]

No. 370.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 25458/25458/14/44.

(No. 400.)

Sir,

Constantinople, D. June 2, 1914.

R. June 8, 1914.

The change of attitude on the part of the Russian Government towards Turkey is the subject of speculation in certain quarters, where it is considered less likely that general considerations are alone influencing Russia than that she has some definite object in view.

This interpretation is borne out by what happened in 1908. Sir A. Nicolson records in his despatch No. 457 of October 16, 1908.⁽²⁾ a conversation which he had with M. Tcharikow in which the question of the desirability of cordial relations between Turkey and Russia is discussed in immediate connection with that of liberating Russia from the restrictions imposed upon her warships in regard to the passage of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles. As it has long been a principal object of Russian policy to secure a modification of these restrictions, it is not impossible that recent events such as the large measure of control obtained by Germany over the Turkish army, and the substantial increase of Turkish naval power may be factors in inducing the Russian Government to raise the question again in the not distant future. If the Russian Government has such an intention it would explain their apparent apathy at a moment when it might have been thought that the protection of the orthodox Greek population would have been engaging their active sympathy and claiming their whole attention. They doubtless realise the difficulty of their task which will not be made any the easier if undertaken before the tender plant of Russo-Turkish amity, which has so recently been planted, has had time to root. It is indeed difficult to contemplate the opening of this question with much confidence. The Turkish Government have not yet recovered from the effect of the wars, their relations with Greece are at present on a very unsatisfactory footing, the lengthy and complicated negotiations respecting the increase of the Customs dues are barely concluded, and it is permissible to view with some misgiving the prospect of another discussion which will probably involve a most intricate negotiation,—possibly raising, amongst other questions, that of the abolition of the Capitulations, and leading to demands on the part of other Powers who would see in the success of Russia a blow to their own ambitions, or who would affect to do so in order to obtain compensating advantages for themselves.

Nevertheless, in view of the friendly relations existing between the British and Russian Governments, which it is of paramount importance to maintain, I assume that, should the question be raised, His Majesty's Government will adopt the same

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

⁽²⁾ [v. Gooch & Temperley, Vol. V, pp. 454-5, No. 391.]

conciliatory attitude as in 1908, and agree not to oppose an alteration in the regulations on the lines and under the conditions then laid down.

It will be remembered that you informed the Turkish Ambassador in 1908, as recorded in your despatch No. 434 of October 15⁽³⁾ to my predecessor, that you had made any change as regards the Straits dependent upon Turkey's willing consent, and had stipulated that no pressure should be applied to her in regard to the question; subject to this, you said that His Majesty's Government agreed that the Straits might be opened under proper conditions, which would be safe for Turkey, which would leave her perfectly free in time of war to open or close them as she pleased and which, if she were neutral, would not place any of the belligerents at a disadvantage.⁽⁴⁾

I have, &c.

LOUIS MALLET.

(³) [*v. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. V, pp. 447-8, No. 333.]

(⁴) [For Sir Edward Grey's reply, *v. infra*, p. 337, *Ed. note.*]

No. 371.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.

F.O. 22982/72/14/44.

(No. 376.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, June 15, 1914.

I have to request your Ex[cellenc]y to take an early opportunity to call the attention of the French Gov[ernmen]t to the note addressed to them by you in accordance with my despatch No. 259 of the 6 ultimo,⁽¹⁾ resp[ectin]g the conditions on which H[is] M[ajesty's] Gov[ernmen]t are prepared to recognize the territorial changes in the Balkans.

Your Ex[cellenc]y should state at the same time that, in view of the attitude of the various Powers as defined in my despatch, H[is] M[ajesty's] Gov[ernmen]t now propose to act independently in accordance with the penultimate paragraph. Having regard to the opinion of the Russian Gov[ernmen]t, who regard all necessary action as having been already taken, and the Capitulations as being already abolished, H[is] M[ajesty's] Gov[ernmen]t do not see what other course is open to them, but they think it due to their intimate relations with France to renew the information.

[I am, &c.

E. GREY.]

(¹) [*v. supra*, pp. 323-4, No. 359.]

No. 372.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 28023/22996/14/37.

(No. 47.) Confidential.

Sir,

Bucharest, D. June 17, 1914.

R. June 23, 1914.

With reference to my despatch No. 45 of yesterday⁽²⁾ I gather from my Russian Colleague that the Emperor, the Imperial family and M. Sazonow were very well satisfied with their visit to Roumania.

(¹) [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet. A copy was sent to St Petersburg.]

(²) [Sir G. Barclay's despatch (No. 45), D. June 16, R. June 23, 1914, described in detail the arrival of the Emperor Nicholas at Constantza and the subsequent events. (F.O. 28021/22996/14/37.)]

M. Poklewski tells me that the visit, while intended to consecrate the friendly relations now existing between the two countries, may be regarded as a return visit for that paid by King Charles to the Emperor in 1898.

I understand that the conversations between M. Sazonow, the King and Roumanian Statesmen were of a somewhat general character, but M. Poklewski tells me that in the course of conversation, M. Bratiano, the Prime Minister, told M. Sazonow that Roumania had no engagement which would preclude her in the event of a European war from taking such course as her interests dictated. It goes without saying that M. Sazonow assured both the King and M. Bratiano that Russia's intentions were sincerely pacific and that if a European war occurred it would not be Russia who provoked it.

So far as M. Poklewski knows no particular progress was made during the visit in the matrimonial project between Prince Carol and one of the Russian Grand Duchesses, though my Colleague tells me that he and M. Sazonow were so busy during the ceremonies at Constantza that they were not in the way of obtaining any information on this point.

I have, &c.

G. BARCLAY.

No. 373.

Mr. Akers-Douglas to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 30385/22996/14/37.

(No. 52.)

Sir,

Bucharest, D. June 22, 1914.

R. July 6, 1914.

As was to be expected, the visit of the Emperor of Russia to Constanza has made a deep impression upon the people of this country. All classes are naturally flattered by the honour paid to their Sovereign and by the warm words in which the Emperor spoke of the part played by Roumania last year: and there is, not unnaturally, a feeling that this country now enjoys a considerably increased political importance in Europe.

Of the coldness, not to say antipathy, now observable towards Austria-Hungary there can be no less doubt than of the very friendly feelings for Russia. As to the immediate significance of the Imperial visit it seems doubtful, from all I can gather, whether any-thing has taken place betokening a change in Roumania's general policy; and it seems reasonable to suppose that she retains her independent attitude towards the grouping of the Powers, without having made, at any rate for the present, any new engagement. No doubt the desire to maintain the Treaty of Bucharest intact and the peace of the Balkans undisturbed has been recognised to be common to the two Governments, as well as a determination that everything should be done, in the interests of their respective trade and shipping, to prevent any closing of the Dardanelles.

The joint representations recently made at Constantinople by the Russian Ambassador and the Roumanian Minister have caused some comment in Europe: and in this connexion I have the honour to enclose a recent article of the Government journal the "*Independance Roumaine*."⁽²⁾ Another journal publishes an article by M. Diamandy, a deputy and a leading member of the Government party, who is the brother of the Roumanian Minister in Petersburg. The writer maintains that the

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Prime Minister. It was sent to St. Petersburg (as No. 284) on July 21.]

⁽²⁾ [Not reproduced.]

"opening of the Dardanelles" is the "first and immediate result of the Tzar's visit," and congratulates Roumania on being the first Balkan state to take an important international step in concert with a Great Power. He points out that Roumania is at a disadvantage in comparison with her neighbours with regard to trade, having no outlet to the Mediterranean but through the Straits.

With very few exceptions the local Press has warmly welcomed the 'rapprochement' with Russia. A few journals not so favourable to Russia and of German or Austrian sympathies—as, for instance, the "Bukarester Tagblatt"—continue to warn Roumania against being drawn into Russia's orbit and losing her independence of action. If Roumania, they say, breaks away from Austria and Germany she will become the tool of Russia and will pay for it by increased expenditure on armaments and subservience to Russia's Balkan policy. They point also to the fact that the Emperor immediately after his visit to Constanza proceeded to Kishineff, where he spoke of Bessarabia as being attached to Russia for a hundred years and animated by sincere Russian sentiments. Has Roumania, ask one or two writers, forgotten Russia's ingratitude?

The "Viitoral" publishes an interview which its Editor claims to have had with M. Sazanow during his visit. His Excellency is reported to have said that from conversations with the Roumanian Prime Minister he has gained the conviction that nothing would in future disturb the friendly relations between Russia and Roumania, who were united by common interests and the same policy of peace. Replying to a remark of the interviewer that Bulgarian newspapers had spoken of a revision of the Treaty of Peace and the meeting of an European Conference, M. Sazanow is reported to have said there was and could be no question of revision.

I have, &c.

A. AKERS-DOUGLAS.

No. 374.

Sir M. de Bunsen to Sir A. Nicolson.⁽¹⁾

Private.⁽²⁾

My dear Nicolson,

Vienna, June 22, 1914.

. . . .⁽³⁾ As to the Turco-Greek dispute, Gryparis, my Greek colleague, is extremely pessimistic. When I point to the Turkish note,⁽⁴⁾ and the readiness of the Turkish Gov[ernment] to allow delegates of the Powers to see for themselves what Turkey is doing to restore the Greeks to their homes in Asia Minor, he says "Je les connais, les Turcs" and refuses to believe in any permanent security being given to the Greek subjects of Turkey. The fear is that the Greeks are thinking not so much of the treatment of the Greek population of Turkey as of the general question whether war with Turkey is not inevitable sooner or later, and whether the present would not be a more favourable time than later on for them to embark on the inevitable conflict.

My Servian colleague, Jovanovich, whom I like much, is very nervous lest his country should be drawn into the Greek quarrel. He fears if war came it could not be easily confined to the sea, and that Bulgaria would not have the strength to oppose a Turkish advance across her territory, though in her own interest she would do anything to keep the Turks out. Jovanovich is convinced that sooner or later Servia will grow into the Great Servia of his dreams; that she will get to the sea, and spread

⁽¹⁾ [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Prime Minister. The endorsement is initialled by Sir Edward Grey.]

⁽²⁾ [Carnock MSS., Vol. III of 1914.]

⁽³⁾ [The opening paragraphs of this letter refer to the visit of the Emperor Nicholas to Roumania and to internal conditions in Austria-Hungary and Albania.]

⁽⁴⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 264, No. 287, note ⁽³⁾.]

over the Austrian Slav provinces. He thinks this is an irresistible tendency, and that time is working for Serbia, who w[ou]ld be most unwise to precipitate events. He is therefore all against a renewal of hostilities in the Balkans, which would interfere with the peaceful development by Serbia of her internal resources. . . .⁽⁵⁾

Yours ever,

MAURICE DE BUNSEN.

⁽⁵⁾ [The rest of the letter is concerned mainly with personalities at the court of Vienna, and adds nothing of importance to information given elsewhere.]

[*ED. NOTE*—On June 25, 1914, Sir Edward Grey replied in his despatch (No. 413, Secret) to Sir L. Mallet's despatch (No. 400) of June 2, 1914 (*supra*, pp. 333-4, No. 370). He referred to a communication of May 21 which he had received from Count Benckendorff showing Russian anxiety owing to the progress of the Turkish fleet, and he added "I am disposed to think that this communication confirms the possibility . . . that Russia may in the near future revert to the question of the Straits . . ."

Your Excellency is correct in assuming that should the question be again raised, His Majesty's Government would adhere to their previous attitude as laid down in my despatch to Sir G. Lowther No. 434 of October 15, 1908." (F.O. 25458/25458/14/44.) *cp Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. V, pp. 447-8, No. 383.]

No. 375.

Mr. Crackanthorpe to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 32747/29978/14/39.

(No. 125.)

Sir;—

Belgrade, D. July 10, 1914.

R. July 20, 1914.

With reference to Sir F. Bertie's despatch No. 326 of the 1st instant⁽²⁾ enclosing an article published in the *Figaro* in which it is stated that steps towards eventual union have already been taken by Montenegro and Serbia under the ægis of Russia, I have the honour to report that I find open expression given in the Servian Ministry for Foreign Affairs to the belief that this union is only a question of time, but that it will be undertaken gradually and by successive steps.

With regard to the report that the announcement of a Customs Union and of the constitution of joint Ministries of Finance and for Foreign Affairs was to have been made on the anniversary of the battle of Kossovo, I have the honour to refer you to my despatch No. 231 of November 29th⁽³⁾ last in which I reported that information had reached me to this effect. In view however of the fact that news of the Archduke's assassination only reached Belgrade late in the afternoon,⁽⁴⁾ it appears probable that the projected announcement had been previously abandoned.

I have, &c.

DAYRELL CRACKANTHORPE.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet. Copies were sent to Paris and to Cettinje.]

⁽²⁾ [Sir F. Bertie's despatch (No. 326), D. July 1, R. July 2, 1914, is not reproduced as the contents are sufficiently indicated above. (F.O. 29798/29798/14/39.)]

⁽³⁾ [Mr. Crackanthorpe's despatch (No. 231), D. November 29, R. December 8, 1913, is not reproduced. It contained the statement given above and added that Montenegro had agreed "to cede to Serbia such rights in the port of Antivari as do not infringe on existing Italian rights" (F.O. 55159/50887/13/39.)]

⁽⁴⁾ [*cp* Mr. Crackanthorpe's despatch (No. 120) of July 2, 1914, *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. XI, pp. 19-20, No. 27.]

CHAPTER LXXXVII.

LIMAN VON SANDERS' MISSION, 1913-14.

[*ED. NOTE.*—The mission of General Liman von Sanders is described in *G P.*, XXXVIII, Chapter 290, pp. 193-318. There are full details in *Siebert*, pp. 676-708 *cp.* also *Imperialismus*, 1st Ser., Vol. I, *passim*; *Die Europäischen Mächte und die Türkei während des Weltkrieges*, (Dresden, 1930), Vol. I, pp. 73-105; Hans Herzfeld: "Die Limankrise und die Politik der Grossmächte in der Jahreswende 1913-4," *Berliner Monatshefte*, September 1933, p. 837 *sqq.*, October 1933, p. 973 *sqq.*]

No. 376.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Constantinople, October 30, 1913.

F.O. 49885/49885/14/44.

D. 5.54 P.M.

Tel. (No. 530.)

R. 10.15 P.M.

German Ambassador told me that German Government have agreed to send a fresh German military mission with considerably extended powers.⁽²⁾ Mission will especially undertake reorganisation of military schools.

Military attaché is informed very confidentially that head of new mission will be General von Liman.

⁽¹⁾ [Copies of this telegram were sent to the Admiralty; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp.* the report of the Russian Ambassador at Berlin on November 21, 1913, *v. Siebert*, pp. 676-7.]

No. 377.

Sir E. Goschen to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 49846/49885/13/44.

(No. 400.)

Berlin, D. November 1, 1913.

Sir,

R. November 3, 1913.

I have the honour to transmit, herewith, a report which I have received from Colonel Russell, Military Attaché to His Majesty's Embassy, relating to a new German Military Mission to Turkey.

I have, &c.

W. E. GOSCHEN.

Enclosure in No. 377.

*Lieutenant-Colonel Russell to Sir E. Goschen.**A new German Military Mission to Turkey.*⁽²⁾

(No. 37.)

Sir,

Berlin, October 31, 1913.

There appears now to be no longer any doubt that a new German military mission is to be sent to Constantinople to assist the Turks in their work of military reform.

The head of this mission is to be Lieutenant-General Liman von Sanders, at present commander of the 22nd Division in Cassel. The names of Lieutenant-General

⁽¹⁾ [The original enclosure was sent to the War Office; a copy was sent to Constantinople (as No. 380) on November 11.]

⁽²⁾ [For the report of the Military Attaché to His Majesty's Embassy at Constantinople, *v. infra*, pp. 349-51, No. 391, *encl.*]

Liman von Sanders's assistants have not yet been published, but it appears that some 30 officers in addition to 12 others, who have already entered into an agreement of this nature with Turkey, are, under the leadership of the above-mentioned General, to make up the military mission referred to.

Lieutenant-General Liman von Sanders has the reputation of being a man of energy, ability and strong character. He is 58 years of age and has had a distinguished military career. He joined the army in 1874 as Otto Liman and was posted to the 115th Infantry Regiment. He was subsequently transferred to the cavalry and has held a number of appointments on the General Staff. He has also commanded the 15th Cavalry Brigade and was Inspector of the 4th Cavalry Inspection before holding his present appointment of commander of the 22nd Division. He was ennobled by the Emperor this year on the occasion of His Imperial Majesty's Jubilee, when he added the name of his deceased wife, von Sanders, to his own patronymic.

It is reported that the German military mission in question is to be granted unlimited powers to carry out its work in Turkey. It is a matter for wonder by whom such powers are guaranteed and in what directions they extend.

I have, &c.

ALICK RUSSELL,

*Lieutenant-Colonel,
Military Attaché.*

No. 378.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 53582/49385/13/44.

(No. 713.)

Sir:—

Foreign Office, November 24, 1913.

I have to inform Your Excellency that the French Ambassador communicated to Sir A. Nicolson to-day the substance of conversations between the French Ambassador at Berlin and the Russian Premier held during the latter's visit to Berlin⁽²⁾ on the subjects, firstly, of the sovereignty of the islands of Scio and Mitylene and, secondly, of the German military mission to Turkey.

As to the former question Monsieur Jules Cambon understood that Russia was not indisposed to the re-establishment of Turkish sovereignty over Scio and Mitylene in view of the close proximity of these islands to the Turkish mainland.

With regard to the latter question it appears that Monsieur Kokovtsoff spoke very seriously both to the Emperor and the Chancellor on the subject of the important military command at Constantinople and in the surrounding district with which the head of the German military mission to Constantinople has been invested. The Chancellor expressed some surprise and appeared perturbed at the serious view which the Russian Government took of this appointment and stated that he was not aware that its functions were of wider scope than those which had been discharged by General von der Goltz.⁽³⁾ He added that the public required some proof that Turkey retained confidence in German military training. It was, however, explained by Monsieur Jules Cambon that the duties of a military command were very different from those of a military adviser and instructor.

The Emperor, to whom the Russian Premier appears to have spoken with considerable emphasis, also tried to minimise the importance of the appointment. Monsieur Kokovtsoff informed His Imperial Majesty that the Russian Government

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Prime Minister. It was repeated to Berlin (No. 352); to St. Petersburg (No. 397). It was based on Sir A. Nicolson's minute recording his conversation with M. Paul Cambon on November 24, 1913.]

⁽²⁾ [For M. Kokovsov's visit to Berlin from November 17 to November 20, *cp. G.P., XXXVIII*, pp. 212-7. *cp. also Stieve, III*, pp. 415-9; *D.D.F., 3^{me} Sér.*, Vol. VIII, p. 626, No. 493; pp. 641-3, No. 506; pp. 657-9, Nos. 520-1.]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. Gooch & Temperley, Vol. V*, p. 43; *Vol. VI*, pp. 188-9, No. 117. *cp. also infra*, p. 350, No. 391, *encl.*; p. 354, No. 396; p. 355, No. 398; p. 357, No. 402, *encl.*]

viewed the matter in a serious light and that they could not admit the appointment of a general of a Great Power to the command of the troops at Constantinople, any more than they could willingly admit a similar appointment at Erzeroum.

He accordingly enquired whether the General's post could not be simply that of Inspector, but His Majesty replied that this was impossible. Monsieur Kokovstoff then proposed that the General should be given the command of the troops at Adrianople. The Emperor, who had previously remarked that he thought that the matter had been settled between him and the Emperor of Russia on the occasion of the latter's visit to Berlin,⁽¹⁾ eventually promised to give the question further consideration.

[I am, &c.

E. GREY.]

(4) [The Emperor Nicholas visited Berlin on the occasion of the marriage of Princess Victoria Louise of Prussia to Prince Ernest Augustus of Brunswick and Luneburg on May 24, 1913. *cp. Q P.*, XXXIV (II), pp. 864-5, and *notes*; XXXVIII, p. 216, and *note*. The simultaneous visit of King George V is mentioned in *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol IX (II), p. 675, *Ed. note*]

No. 379.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.

St. Petersburg, November 25, 1913.

F.O. 53521/49385/14/44.

D. 7.26 P.M.

Tel. (No. 393.)

R. 10.15 P.M.

Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs to-day requested me to telegraph to you concerning engagement by Turkey of forty-two German officers with a German general in executive command of army corps at Constantinople. He is much perturbed by this arrangement, which he says greatly displeases the Emperor, and he has complained to the German Government that it was an unfriendly proceeding on their part not to mention matter to him when in Berlin.

M. Sazonof considers that foreign Ambassadors will be placed in undignified position by fact that Turkish capital will be practically in hands of a German commander. He thinks it necessary that other Powers should make some compensating demands of Turkish Government.⁽¹⁾

As to form which such demands should take, he mentioned appointments of Russian officers in Armenia and British officials in Asiatic Turkey. These are, however, merely ideas which occurred to him and to which he himself saw objections. He is anxious to learn your views.

MINUTES.

The Russians have a just ground for complaint—and M. Kokovtsoff spoke seriously both to the German Emperor and the German Chancellor. The minutes recording the inform[atio]n communicated by M. Cambon on this question give ampler details than are furnished in this tel[egram].⁽²⁾ I should not at this stage repeat Mr. O'Beirne's telegram. At the same time the question does not concern us to the same extent as it very naturally affects Russia, though it is not without importance to us also. On the other hand it is eminently desirable, especially at this moment when some misgivings exist as to our intimacy with Germany, that we should not appear to be indifferent to, still less to be sympathetic with, the German action—which will establish Germany in a very predominant position at Const[antino]ple. I would suggest that we should reply to the effect⁽³⁾: that we regard the investiture of the head of the German military mission with the command of the troops in and around Const[antino]ple as a most unusual and undesirable step, and that we quite appreciate the impression which such a step has produced on the Russian Gov[ernmen]t: and that we are well disposed to admit that the Russian Gov[ernmen]t would be justified in taking some measures to counteract in their own interests the effects of this unprecedented step, provided they would not affect the stability of the Turkish régime.

⁽¹⁾ [For M. Sazonov's instructions to London on November 25, 1913, *v. Siebert*, p. 678.]

⁽²⁾ [The reference here is to the minute by Sir A. Nicolson on which the immediately preceding document was based.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. infra*, p. 342, No. 381.]

We should be glad to hear what precise measures the Russian Gov[ernmen]t would propose, and if possible we should be glad to give them a sympathetic moral support. The Russian Gov[ernmen]t will doubtless communicate with the French Gov[ernmen]t on the subject. M. Sazonow will doubtless understand, and Mr. O'Beirne should touch on this point tactfully, that the question though not without serious interest to us is not of the same importance to us as it is to Russia.

Bring up to-morrow.

A. N.

E. G.

26 11.13

No. 380.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 54114/49385/13/44.

(No. 367.)

St. Petersburg, D. November 26, 1913.

Sir :—

R. December 1, 1913.

With reference to my telegram No. 393 of the 25th instant⁽²⁾ I have the honour to state that I found the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs yesterday very seriously perturbed by the announcement of the definite engagement by Turkey of 42 German Officers to hold executive commands in the Turkish Army, with a German General in command of the Army Corps at Constantinople. His Excellency said that he was in Livadia when he received the first news of the intended arrangement. The Emperor had been greatly displeased and had asked why nothing had been said of the matter to M. Sazonow when in Berlin. He had thereupon complained in strong language on the subject to the German Government, and had been told by the German Chancellor that the matter seemed so much in the ordinary course of things that he had not thought it worth mentioning. His own impression was that the German Military authorities had made the arrangement without consulting the Chancellor, whom he believes to be frequently kept in ignorance of what is passing at Berlin. The German Government in reply to his observations had, while expressing great regret, said that having once agreed to the request regarding the engagement of German officers which they said had been put forward by Turkey, it was impossible for them to recede from their undertaking without serious loss of prestige. On this point I took occasion to remind M. Sazonow that His Majesty's Government had done that very thing in regard to the engagement of British Officers in Armenia.

M. Sazonow went on to dwell on the meaning of the arrangement now made. The Turkish Capital would he said be virtually in the hands of the German Commander and the foreign Embassies would be dependent on him for protection, which he did not consider a dignified position for the Ambassadors. It was clearly necessary for other Powers to make some demands of Turkey in the way of compensation, but M. Sazonow seemed much at a loss as to the form which such demands should take. He said that he had been in consultation with the French Government on the subject and had not spoken to me about it sooner only because he had not seen me for some days, but he was anxious to learn the views of His Majesty's Government. As possible demands on Turkey he mentioned a demand for the appointment of Russian officers in Armenia, adding immediately afterwards that Great Britain for her part could of course make a demand for the employment of British officials (in Asiatic Turkey). These were however evidently only ideas which occurred to him and he said himself that he saw very strong objections to any demands of this kind concerning Armenia.

[⁽¹⁾ This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet. A copy was sent to Berlin.]

[⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

In short M. Sazonow had clearly arrived at no definite conclusion as to the reply which Russia could make to Germany's last move at Constantinople.

One matter which His Excellency gave me to understand caused him considerable anxiety was the likelihood that the course now taken by Turkey would give rise to violent comments in the Russian newspapers, which would lead to a revival of Press polemics with Germany. This possibility seemed very unpleasant to him. He remarked that there had fortunately been a cessation of newspaper quarrels between the two countries for some time past.

I have, &c.

HUGH O'BEIRNE.

No. 381.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. O'Beirne.

F.O. 53521/49385/13/44.

Tel. (No. 765.)

Foreign Office, November 27, 1913, 1.55 p.m.

Your tel[egram] No. 393 of Nov[ember] 25.⁽¹⁾

You should inform M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] that we regard the placing of the Turkish troops in and around Constantinople under the actual command of German officers as a new departure of a very surprising character that must be a matter of great concern to other Powers who are interested in Turkey. We therefore fully appreciate the feeling of the Emperor and the Russian Gov[ernmen]t respecting it.

The German Gov[ernmen]t could not with justice object to other Powers demanding similar advantages from the Turkish Gov[ernmen]t to compensate and safeguard their own interests, but it is difficult to see what advantages consistent with the maintenance of Turkish independence could be obtained by other Powers which would be adequate compensation and safeguard for their interests.

An alternative would be to point this out at Berlin and to have a further explanation with the German Gov[ernmen]t.

A very difficult situation has been created and I should like time to consider it and will let M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] have our views upon it after consideration.⁽²⁾

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 340, No. 379.]

⁽²⁾ [It appears that M. de Etter had an interview with Sir A. Nicolson on November 26, in Sir Edward Grey's absence, *v. Siebert*, p. 678. Sir A. Nicolson anticipated the views of Sir Edward Grey as given in the above telegram, but said "The British Government's opinion will be communicated . . . to-morrow after Grey's return." M. de Etter's report of November 28 gives a fuller account of British views than is contained in the above telegram. *v. Siebert*, pp. 679-80. *cp.* also *D.D.F.*, 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VIII, pp. 675-6, No. 536; pp. 683-4, No. 541; p. 689 No. 549.]

No. 382.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir A. Nicolson.⁽¹⁾

Private.⁽²⁾

Dear Sir Arthur,

St. Petersburg, November 27, 1913.

. . . .⁽³⁾ It is not at all surprising that Sazonow should be very seriously upset by the arrangement just come to by Turkey with regard to the engagement of German

⁽¹⁾ [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe; to Lord Morley. The endorsement is initialled by Sir Edward Grey]

⁽²⁾ [Carnock MSS., Vol. X of 1913]

⁽³⁾ [The opening paragraphs of this letter are not reproduced as they refer to the internal Russian situation and to Persian affairs.]

Officers having executive command. When one thinks what Constantinople means to Russia it is certainly an intolerable thing for her to see the town virtually in the hands of a German Commander. But much as I sympathise with Sazonov his attitude seems to me to be one merely of impotent annoyance. He says he has used strong language at Berlin. What good will that do? He had when I last saw him no definite ideas at all as to how to reply to the German *coup*. He spoke of making demands for the appointment of Russian Officers in Armenia. He even said that Russia could demand that a Russian General should have executive command of the Turkish force at Bayazid. I did not think that worth reporting as of course he does not mean to do it. I should have thought that the only effective reply for Russia to make would have been to inform Turkey that so long as a foreign Officer was in command at Constantinople she would insist on keeping one or two warships at Constantinople which would when occasion called for it land a detachment for the protection of the Russian Embassy. But as Russia is certainly not prepared to take any decided course of that kind any demands for compensation which she may make of Turkey will probably prove quite futile.

Yours very sincerely,
HUGH O'BEIRNE.

No. 383.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

St. Petersburg, November 29, 1913.

F.O. 54081/49385/13/44.

D. 1 P.M.

Tel. (No. 395.)

R. 2.45 P.M.

I read your telegram No. 765 of Nov[ember] 27⁽²⁾ to the M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs].

He seemed a little disappointed, saying that he had hoped much from Great Britain in this matter and mentioning that the French M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] had declared to the Turkish Ambassador that France would exact signal satisfaction, moral and material, from Turkey. I then drew his attention particularly to the last paragraph of your telegram.

From a remark made to me just previously by the German Chargé d'Affaires I had gathered that the German Government was considering the possibility of the German General having command at Adrianople instead of at Constantinople. I questioned the M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs], who replied that he had no confidence in Germany's intentions on this point, but he would not have the same objections to Adrianople as to Constantinople, and he had spoken in this sense at Berlin.

Turning to the question of possible demands for compensation on Turkey, he asked why we should not demand the appointment of two Governors-General, Russian and British, in Armenia? He also referred to the possibility of demanding the appointment of a Russian officer to command the Turkish force at Erzeroum, but I do not think that he seriously contemplates the latter suggestion. The M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] continues to be gravely disturbed by the whole question.

MINUTES.

I sh[oul]d be inclined to ask the Turkish Gov[ernmen]t to let us know the exact terms of the contract so that we may ascertain what are the precise functions and duties accorded to the German Gov[ernmen]t. We sh[oul]d ask the Turkish Gov[ernmen]t if the matter is finally settled—and if not we sh[oul]d warn them of the grave dangers to which they are

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Paris by bag.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 342, No. 381.]

exposing themselves by entrusting the command of the troops in and around Const[antino]ple to a foreign general who w[oul]d be absolute master of the situation and be able to use the army for any purposes which may appear to him desirable such as deposition of Sultans, coups d'état, foreign changes of gov[ernmen]t etc.

A N

Bring up to-morrow ⁽³⁾

E. G

30.11.13

⁽³⁾ [*cp. infra*, p. 347, No. 387.]

No. 384.

Lord Granville to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 54176/49885/13/44.

(No. 588.)

Paris, D. November 29, 1913.

Sir,

R. December 1, 1913.

I had occasion to call on the French Minister for Foreign Affairs to-day in order to carry out your instructions regarding the delimitation of the Southern Frontier of Albania,⁽²⁾ and Monsieur Pichon took the opportunity to speak to me on the subject of the German Military Mission to Turkey, and to explain the message which he said he had sent to you through the French Ambassador in London.⁽³⁾

Monsieur Pichon said that I was no doubt aware of the strong objections entertained in Russia to the proposed appointment of General von Liman to the command of Constantinople, and he believed the Russian Government had addressed a similar communication to you on the subject as they had to him.

Monsieur Pichon considered the matter a very serious one. He had already spoken to the Turkish Ambassador about it, pointing out to him that the fact of the capital of the Empire being under the command of a Foreign Officer was derogatory to the dignity of Turkey, made the position of the Diplomatic Corps difficult and unpleasant, might easily lead to awkward situations through differences of opinion between the General and the German Embassy, and might possibly bring about a most undesirable international situation—for instance if there had been a German General in command of Constantinople at the time of the Young Turk revolution, he would presumably have had to protect the Sultan, and what would have happened then? Monsieur Pichon had emphasized to the Turkish Ambassador, as he did over and over again to me, that this was no case of French jealousy of Germany, and that his views on the subject would have been exactly the same if the General selected had been of any other nationality. At the same time he was particularly distressed at a question of such seriousness arising, as he was very anxious and was working hard for better relations with Germany, and, as I knew, the French Government were at present engaged in negotiations at Berlin about Asia Minor which were progressing very favourably.

I told Monsieur Pichon that I had gathered from a conversation which Sir Edward Goschen had had with Herr Zimmermann⁽⁴⁾ that German "amour propre" was involved in the matter, as the Germans believed that if they refused to send a military mission, Turkey would apply to some other Power, and, in view of the newspaper

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp. 70-1, *Ed. note.*]

⁽³⁾ [*v. D.D.F.*, 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VIII, pp. 685-6, No. 544. M. Paul Cambon acted on this instruction of December 1. *v. infra*, p. 348, No. 390; *D.D.F.*, 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VIII, pp. 713-4, No. 586. *v. also Siebert*, pp. 678-9, where M. Isvolski reports the views of M. Pichon on November 26.]

⁽⁴⁾ [No record of this conversation can be traced in the Foreign Office Archives or in the private papers of Sir Edward Grey and Lord Carnock.]

attacks that had been made on General von der Goltz and German instruction and arms at the time of the Turkish defeats, such a proceeding would be a heavy blow to German prestige; I had also gathered that General von Liman was not to have the command of Constantinople but merely of four instructional regiments which were or were about to be quartered there.⁽⁵⁾ and I added that it appeared that stringent instructions had been given to the German officers to avoid being involved in any way with politics.

Monsieur Pichon replied that he quite understood that German amour propre should be sensitive on the subject after the extremely foolish and regrettable language which had been used by the French Press, but that there ought to be no difficulty, if Germany withdrew her promise to send a mission, to persuade all the other Great Powers to agree not to send one. If it was true that General von Liman's command was to be only four instructional regiments, the proposal appeared to him less objectionable, but he would still think it unfortunate that Constantinople should be the General's Headquarters. He was not much impressed by the alleged instructions to the officers to avoid politics.

I asked His Excellency whether Russia had not proposed that she, France, and England should demand compensation in the form of similar commands elsewhere, and whether he approved of such an idea. He replied that he objected most strongly to it as it would obviously mean the beginning of the partition of Turkey, which the French, British and German Governments alike were so anxious to avoid, though there were of course certain impatient elements in Russia to whom this German mission was affording valuable assistance.

Monsieur Pichon did not suggest that he or you should take any steps at Berlin—it would be better to leave Russia to make her representations there alone, but he was anxious that you should join with him in speaking very seriously to the Turkish Government, in a most friendly spirit and form, in the sense in which he had already spoken to the Turkish Ambassador.

I have, &c.
GRANVILLE.

MINUTE.

M. Pichon and M. Cambon do not altogether speak with the same voice

E. A. C.
Dec[ember] 2.
A. N.
E. G.

⁽⁵⁾ [Marginal note by Sir A. Nicolson: "Whence was this infor[matio]n obtained? A. N."]

No. 385.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.

St. Petersburg, December 1, 1913.

F.O. 54365/49385/13/44.

D. 8·20 P.M.

Tel. (No. 398.) Secret.

R. 10 P.M.

My telegram No. 395 of Nov[ember] 29.⁽¹⁾

Minister for Foreign Affairs spoke to me again with greatest seriousness of question of German commander at Constantinople. He said this matter would be a test of the value of Triple *Entente*. He believed that if the three Powers show themselves really resolved Germany would not persist in her intentions, but, to be

⁽¹⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 343, No. 383.]

quite frank, he thought Germany might disregard remonstrances of France and Russia if she had not also before her fear of British fleet.

Present position of Russian pourparlers with Berlin is that, in reply to Russian representation, a communication was received from German Chancellor dwelling on reasons making it difficult or impossible for Germany to recede from her undertaking to Turkey, but adding that General von Sanders would be asked whether it would be practicable for him to have command elsewhere than Constantinople. M. Sazonof thereupon pointed out that question vitally affecting Russo-German relations should not be left to decision of German general.

Minister for Foreign Affairs is anxiously awaiting further expression of your views.⁽²⁾

(²) [*v. infra*, p. 347, No. 388.]

No. 386.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. O'Beirne.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 58646/49385/13/44.

(No. 402.) Confidential.

Sir,

Foreign Office, December 1, 1913.

The French Amb[assado]r shewed to Sir A. Nicolson on Nov[ember] 25 a tel[egram] from the French Rep[resentati]ve at St. Petersburg relating to the annoyance felt in Russia at the appointment of a German General to the command of the troops at Constantinople,⁽²⁾ on which subject I addressed to you my desp[atch] No. 397 of the 24th ult[imo].⁽³⁾

The tel[egram] stated that M. Sazonof had said that the relations between Russia and Germany "deviennent mauvais." The German Chancellor had told the Russian Premier that, in view of the Russian objections to the appointment of a German General to the command of the Constantinople Army Corps, he would see the Emperor again, and he hoped that a solution would be found which would calm Russian susceptibilities.

But on the evening of the 23rd ult[imo] the German Chargé d'Affaires at St. Petersburg informed M. Sazonof that the German Gov[ernmen]t found it to be impossible to ask the Turkish Gov[ernmen]t to change the appointment, as the consequence of any such request would be that German prestige would greatly suffer, and it was therefore impossible to take a step which would be disastrous to German interests.

[I am, &c.

E. GREY.]

(¹) [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Prime Minister.]

(²) [*cp D.D.F.*, 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VIII, pp. 657-9, No. 520.]

(³) [*v. supra*, pp. 339-40, No. 378, and note (¹).]

No. 387.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir L. Mallet.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 54365/49385/13/44.

Tel. (No. 557.)

Foreign Office, December 2, 1913, 5.30 P.M.

Information has reached us that the effective executive command of the Turkish Army Corps at Constantinople is to be given by the Porte to a German General supported by a large number of German officers. This would be a position that differs entirely from that previously held by Germans or any other foreign officers.

It would place the whole corps diplomatique at Constantinople in German power.

The key of the Straits would practically be in German hands.

The German General could take military measures that would impair the Sovereignty of the Sultan.

The equilibrium of the Powers would be broken, which is the guarantee of the existence of Turkey. For instance if Germany be given this preponderating position in Constantinople other Powers will make similar demands to secure their own position in the Turkish dominions and Turkey will be unable to refuse these demands on any ground of equity.

These are all considerations that should be of grave concern to Turkey. They are matters of concern more or less to every Power that is interested in Turkey.

You should concert with your French and Russian colleagues as to pointing this out to the Porte and asking therefore to be informed of exactly what the proposed contract and arrangement with Germany is.

As this is a first step it would be better not to give the communication a collective character but to make it separately, though in identic or similar terms to show that the three Powers are acting in accord.⁽²⁾

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to St. Petersburg (Nos. 777-8); to Paris (Nos. 433-4), with instructions to "inform Minister for Foreign Affairs of the instructions sent." *cp.* reference to the views of Mr. Asquith and Sir Edward Grey in M. de Etter's telegrams of December 2, *Siebert*, pp. 680-1.]

⁽²⁾ [Marginal note by Sir Edward Grey: "This may now be sent off. I have given a paraphrase to M. Cambon. E. G."]

No. 388.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. O'Beirne.

F.O. 54365/49385/13/44.

Tel. (No. 780.)

Foreign Office, December 2, 1913, 6.10 P.M.

Your telegram No. 398.⁽¹⁾

The instruction I have sent to British Ambassador at Constantinople should satisfy Russian M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] for the present.⁽²⁾ He should however bear in mind that the German command at Constantinople, though sufficiently disagreeable for all other Powers, is a matter of more intimate concern to Russia than to any of us. It is therefore not a question in which we can be more Russian than the Russians, and the German Gov[ernment] are much more likely to be influenced by their apprehension of how far Russian remonstrances are likely to be carried than by fear of British action.⁽³⁾

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 345-6, No. 385.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. immediately preceding document.*]

⁽³⁾ [*cp.* Sir A. Nicolson's private letter to Mr. O'Beirne, *infra*, pp. 352-3, No. 393; *cp.* also *infra*, p. 355, No. 399.]

No. 389.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 54506/49385/13/44.

Tel. (No. 598.)

Constantinople, December 2, 1913.

My telegram No. 530 of 30th October.⁽²⁾

It is difficult to ascertain exactly what the powers of the military mission will be, but it is apparently clear that General Liman is to have executive control over Constantinople Army Corps.

The German Ambassador tells me that General Liman and another general are arriving very soon, but that the rest of the mission will come later. He said that they would start work in the military school. The Russian Ambassador has merely touched upon the subject with me, and has not told me that he has any instructions, but I understand that the Russian view is that it is impossible to allow a foreign general to control the Constantinople garrison. The French Ambassador tells me confidentially that he is expecting instructions to support the Russian Ambassador in representations to the Turkish Government.

⁽¹⁾ [The text given above is taken from the copy in the *Confidential Print* as the original decypher cannot be traced.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 338, No. 376]

No. 390.

Sir Edward Grey to Lord Granville.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 54664/49385/13/44.

(No. 729.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, December 2, 1913.

M. Cambon having shown me yesterday an instruction from M. Pichon, suggesting a communication in common accord in Constantinople on the part of France and England about the German command of the Turkish Army Corps in Constantinople, I gave M. Cambon to-day a paraphrase of the instruction, telegram number 557 to Sir Louis Mallet to-day.⁽²⁾ I pointed out that it was founded to a large extent on the arguments that M. Pichon had used, but that I thought it would be better that the Russian Ambassador also should make the representation, and I had therefore inserted that in the instruction. I thought too that it would be better, at any rate at this stage, not to make the communication collective.⁽³⁾

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 347, No. 387, and note ⁽²⁾. *cp. D.D.F.*, 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VIII, pp 718-20, Nos. 571-2]

⁽³⁾ [Lord Granville in his telegram (No 160), D. December 3, R. December 4, 1913, stated that he had communicated the substance of Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 557) to the Directeur Politique, who expressed "entire approval" and added that similar instructions were being sent to the French Ambassador at Constantinople (F.O. 54727/49385/13/44) *v. supra*, p. 347, No. 387, and note ⁽¹⁾.]

No. 391.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 55197/49385/13/44.

(No. 982.)

Constantinople, D. December 2, 1913.

Sir:—

R. December 8, 1913.

I enclose a report from the Military Attaché on the German Military Mission to this country.

It will be seen that General Liman von Sanders will have command of the 1st Army Corps which is a large extension of the powers conferred upon any previous mission, as it will in theory, at any rate, put the military control of the capital into the hands of foreigners, together with a large measure of political power.

Baron Wangenheim has mentioned the mission to me on one or two occasions but has been inclined to minimise its importance. When I asked His Excellency on the 29th instant [ultimo] what General Liman was going to do on his arrival, he replied that he would be principally occupied with the reorganisation of the military schools. It is possible that in practice, there may be no very serious results from this appointment but, in a country where the army has on recent occasion had much to say in political matters, it would seem a matter of some concern that the command of the Army Corps resident at Constantinople should be in the hands of the Germans.

My Russian Colleague mentioned the matter to me for the first time yesterday and expressed the opinion that had Adrianople been chosen it would have been less objectionable.

I understood from him that the question was being handled at Berlin.

I have, &c.

LOUIS MALLET.

Enclosure in No. 391.

Lieutenant-Colonel Tyrrell to Sir L. Mallet.

(No. 41.)

Sir,

Constantinople, December 2, 1913.

As the prospect of the arrival of a new German Military Mission to reform and train the Turkish army has, owing to rumoured Russian displeasure, excited some discussion during the last few days, I have the honour to submit the following general report on the subject, though, in the absence of any real knowledge of what are the conditions agreed upon between the German Ambassador and the Turkish Minister of War it is difficult to say anything very definite, or to judge the degree of importance which should be attached to the Mission.

As Your Excellency is aware, an Iradé sanctioning the Mission in principle was issued at the end of October, and it was then known that General Liman von Sanders, commanding the 22nd Division at Cassel, would be its Chief. Though various statements were then current as to the number of officers to be comprised in the mission, their functions, powers, &c., I am able to say that, though there will probably be thirty or forty officers including those already in the Turkish service, some or all of whom may be selected to remain, such details have not yet been decided, and will not be until General Liman has been here, studied the question on the spot, and conferred with the Turkish Military Authorities. His arrival is now expected in a week, and he will probably be accompanied by one or two staff officers.

He will also have the benefit of the assistance of Major von Strempel, the German Military Attaché, who returned to Constantinople two days ago after an absence of a month in Germany, where he doubtless discussed the whole question with General

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet. A copy was sent to the War Office.]

Liman. There appears to be no doubt that Major von Strempel will now enter the Turkish service as one of the new Mission, and will be employed on the Staff of, if not as Chief of Staff to, General Liman. This is a point of some importance, as Major von Strempel has been here for six or seven years and has a very good acquaintance with the Turkish army and with Constantinople, and many intimate political relations, through Enver Bey and other German-trained officers, with the party now in power.

Regarding the scope and duties of the Mission, all that I can at present say has been decided is that the I Army Corps, stationed at Constantinople, is to become a "model" Army Corps under the command of General Liman, and that all the more important commands and administrative duties in it will be exercised by the German officers of his Mission. He will have executive command in this Army Corps, as if he were a Turkish officer, and so over all the troops in Constantinople (unless a second Army Corps be stationed there). He will also have the supervision (command ?) of all the Military Schools in the Capital, which will bring the Turkish equivalents of our Woolwich and Sandhurst, the Staff College, the musketry and gunnery schools, the non-commissioned officers' schools, and various other military schools, and institutions for training and practical instruction, nominally under German control.

The last German Military Mission, of which the officers were selected by Marshal von der Goltz four years ago,⁽²⁾ also had that blessed, but indeterminate and illusive, thing "executive command." They commanded "model" regiments, just as General Liman will command a "model" Army Corps. Their mission was a failure; in spite of their executive powers the German officers could not get their commands carried out, their fortifications constructed, or their advice taken, and when the Turkish army met with nothing but disaster in war it was, in many quarters, the fashion to blame the Germans for it. Now it is inconceivable that the Germans, with this experience behind them, would again court failure by accepting the task of instructing the Turkish army without such changes in the conditions of their service as would give them the means of making their ideas prevail, their advice acted upon, and their wishes or commands properly executed.

German officers with whom I have talked are emphatic on this point, and Turkish Generals have told me that the retention of their present posts will be dependent on the new German General. If the latter is really to be entrusted with the selection of officers for the highest appointments in the Turkish army, it is a most important point, and should such prove to be the case, similar powers might well be claimed for the British Admiral here, thus enabling him to remove incompetent and obstructive officials in high places, and so deal satisfactorily with the chief difficulty of his task of reorganising the Navy. Another thing that the Germans say is that the new Mission will have its own budget, within the limits of which expenditure will be entirely under the control of General Liman and his Staff—also an important point, for without a certain degree of pecuniary control they will be able to effect little.

How much of this may prove to be true I can not say, but I am personally inclined to discount it a good deal. Izzet Pasha, the Minister of War, tells me that a lot of nonsense has been talked, and written in the papers, about the Mission, that it will have no separate budget, that the pay of the officers is fixed at a lower rate than that of those at present in the Turkish service, that it will have no control, other than advisory, over military expenditure, and that it will by no means have the military control and extensive powers which people think. This may be only that he is afraid of owing to a state of things which would be most unpopular in the army generally or that his pride will not allow him to admit that the Turkish army is really to be in the hands of foreigners, but to me his attitude is significant of the difficulties which await the German officers, and of the passive obstruction which they will encounter and which will render many of their measures nugatory, even if their full powers have been sufficiently safeguarded on paper in the contract between the German Embassy

(2) [*cp. supra*, p. 339, No. 378, and note (3).]

and the Minister of War. Izzet Pasha is already inclined to emphasise the point that he did not sign the contract, which was signed in his absence by the Minister of Marine acting for him.

Under the circumstances, and having regard to the rather unfair criticisms on German military efficiency, German guns, &c. which were made after the defeat of the Turks in the last war, it may be asked why the Germans think it worth while to renew their attempt to reform the Turkish army, and what they hope to gain by doing so.

The presence of German officers is undoubtedly of direct commercial advantage to Germany, as enormous quantities of military material of all kinds must be purchased. There may also be great political advantages, but these are rather outside my province and beyond the scope of this despatch, which deals with the subject only from a military point of view. From that point of view it does not seem to me that it is going to help either the Turks or the Germans very much. It will inevitably tend towards a disproportionately large military expenditure and to the maintenance of an army beyond the resources of the Empire, as heretofore. It will also lead to discontent with the Germans in the army itself and in the country at large. Though the Constantinople Army Corps may indeed become a model, very few officers, comparatively speaking, will benefit by direct contact with the Germans and by living at Constantinople, which is still the heart's desire of most Turkish officers. Those who are kept in distant garrisons will view with disfavour the position of the foreigners and of the favoured few who are attached to them as interpreters, adjutants, &c., and it is already the subject of adverse comment that the Germans will not go to Erzinjan or other distant garrisons, but are only coming out on condition of living at Constantinople.

If the real feelings of the Turks and of the majority of the officers are as above indicated, it may be wondered why, especially after the results of the last war, a German mission has been invited at all. I can only advance two reasons. One is that the attitude of the German Government in taking no real steps to prevent its officers from taking an active part in the war made a most favourable impression on the Turkish army. As pointed out in a despatch of mine on the subject, the conditions it made that German officers must renounce their nationality were a pure farce, and the result was that they rendered valuable services to the Turks, actually commanding Divisions in the field, and at the same time gained most valuable experience which may in future be at the service of their own country. The other is that the mission has not been arranged for by the army as a whole or by the nation at large, but by the Turkish Government, under the direction of a pro-German clique of officers and others, being much the same men as directed the policy of Turkey in 1910 and 1911 and gave it a distinctly pro-German direction.

Since I last reported on the subject of the German officers here some casualties have occurred, and I annex a list⁽³⁾ showing those who are actually in the Turkish service at the present moment. Colonel Tupschoewski died at Adrianople last October, and L[ieutenant]-Col[onel]s Bischof, Sauer, and Vollbrecht have left the Turkish service and returned to Germany, and there now remain the twelve shown on the list. Whether any or all of these will be included in the new mission it remains for General Liman to decide, but presumably all will be kept till the expiration of their present contracts.

I have, &c.

G. E. TYRRELL,

L[ieutenant]t Col[onel],
Military Attaché.

(3) [Not reproduced.]

No. 392.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir L. Mallet.*Private.⁽¹⁾

My dear Mallet,

London, December 2, 1913.

I was very glad to get your letters.⁽²⁾

This question about the German military command in Constantinople has troubled the waters. My own view is that we should get from the Turks all the information we can, and make it very clear to them that they will expose themselves to demands from other Powers. We shall not be the first to press them, but Russia is bound to do so in some way or other. If the Turks have really acted under German pressure, I think that the fair thing would be to take up the matter in Berlin. But that must be a further stage.

I hope that the Armenian Reforms will not drag on. The Turks ought really to make some proposal to the Powers. They can do nothing effective except in agreement with the Powers; and, if they would only propose the Russo-German scheme as their own, things would really make progress, to the great advantage of the Turks and every one else.

Yours sincerely,

E. GREY.

⁽¹⁾ [Grey MSS., Vol. 41.]⁽²⁾ [For Sir L. Mallet's letter of November 25, 1913, *v. supra*, pp. 150-1, No. 165. There were two other letters of the same date referring to financial questions Grey MSS., Vol. 41.]

No. 393.

*Sir A. Nicolson to Mr. O'Beirne.*Private.⁽¹⁾

My dear O'Beirne:—

Foreign Office, December 2, 1913.

I am much obliged to you for the letter which I received by the last Messenger.⁽²⁾

We are rather puzzled as to what to do in respect to the appointment of the German General at Constantinople. This afternoon we are going to have a talk with Cambon as to what line would be the best to follow,⁽³⁾ and before this letter reaches you I have no doubt that you will have received a telegram on the subject.⁽⁴⁾ My own idea would be to ascertain from the Turks what are the precise functions which have been confided to the German General under the contract, and to point out to the Turks the dangers to which they are exposing themselves by placing the garrison at Constantinople under the command of a foreigner. Your telegram No. 398⁽⁵⁾ which we have just received may possibly alter the above views. The difficulty always in dealing with Sazonoff is that one never knows precisely how far he is prepared to go. Though we are quite ready to admit that the appointment, if it be really of the character which we are given to believe, is of a very serious nature, still we should look rather foolish if we took the question up warmly and then found that Sazonoff more or less deserted us. In fact there is a certain disinclination on our part to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for Russia. Pray do not give the slightest indication that these views do exist in our minds, for I only tell you this for your own information. Besides, as I have said before, you will most probably have received a telegram giving Grey's views upon the subject.⁽⁴⁾ It is clear that as the question is one in which the German Emperor is personally interested, and as we understand it was really settled on his own initiative without consultation either with the Chancellor or the German

⁽¹⁾ [Carnock MSS., Vol. X of 1913.]⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 342-3, No. 382.]⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 348, No. 390.]⁽⁴⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 347, Nos. 387-8.]⁽⁵⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 345-6, No. 385.]

Minister for Foreign Affairs, it makes it all the more difficult for Germany to recede. As you know in these cases the Emperor is inclined to be exceedingly obstinate. I do see all the disadvantages and even possible danger of the Turkish troops being placed under the command of a German General; still I am not quite sure that the danger is not more apparent than real. I have my doubts if the troops could be trusted always to obey the orders which they receive from a foreigner. However, it is of no use my commenting further upon this subject as after the conversation this afternoon I hope that we shall be able to come to a decision on the matter. I do not suppose that in any case Sazonoff has the slightest intention of straining Russia's relations with Germany to a breaking point on the matter. . . .⁽⁶⁾

[Yours, &c.

A. NICOLSON.]

⁽⁶⁾ [The remaining paragraphs are of a general nature and refer to Persia, Thibet and other subjects irrelevant to the present chapter.]

No. 394.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

St. Petersburg, December 3, 1913.

F.O. 54672/49385/13/44.

D. 8.40 P.M.

Tel. (No. 400.)

R. 10.15 P.M.

Your telegram No. 778 of 2nd December.⁽²⁾

Minister for Foreign Affairs, on account of a family bereavement, could not see me, but I communicated the substance of your telegram No. 557 of Dec[ember] 2⁽²⁾ to Constantinople to Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs, who expressed complete concurrence in its terms.

He informed me that the German (Chargé d'Affaires had just stated to him that question of German officer commanding at Constantinople would not be left to the decision of the German general (see my telegram No. 398 of Dec[ember] 1).⁽³⁾ The latter had been asked for his views on the technical aspect of the question, and on the receipt of his report final decision would be taken by the German Government after consideration by the Chancellor personally. The German Government had never intended to make a political question of this matter, which they had treated from purely technical military side.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Constantinople (as No. 559); to Paris (as No. 436); to Berlin (as No. 410).]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 347, No. 387, and *note* (1).]

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 345-6, No. 385.]

No. 395.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 54654/49385/13/44.

Tel. (No. 600.)

Constantinople, December 3, 1913.

My telegram No. 598 of 2nd December.⁽²⁾

In the last few days it has been reported that some of the more eminent Turkish generals and officers are opposed to the German mission, and I believe it to be the case that they have addressed a memorandum to the Government on the subject.

Djemal Bey, commandant in Constantinople, is said to be in sympathy with them.

⁽¹⁾ [The text given above is taken from the copy in the *Confidential Print*, as the original decypher cannot be traced. It was sent to Paris (as No. 435); to St. Petersburg (as No. 781).]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 348, No. 389.]

No. 396.

*Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.**Constantinople, December 3, 1913 .*

F.O. 54670/49385/13/44.

D. 9.15 P.M.

Tel. (No. 601.)

R. 11.15 P.M.

Your telegram No. 557 of Dec[ember] 2.⁽¹⁾

The French Ambassador has not yet received his instructions, but expects them shortly. I learn that General Limann [*sic*] will be a member of Superior Military Council, an advisory body, which deals with military questions as well as with promotion and selection of senior officers. From military point of view Limann's membership of this council seems natural and almost inevitable.

French Ambassador thinks it of some importance, as it might enable him to suggest or initiate movements of troops and appointments of officers to suit German purposes, or, at least, to facilitate his doing so.

Von der Goltz⁽²⁾ was [vice] president of this council, but was rarely here.

Russian Ambassador did not know that Limann was to be a member of the council when I spoke to him about it, but he thought it important. I doubt wisdom of raising the point, and shall not do so without instructions, because I think that it will be better to concentrate on the main objection.⁽³⁾

(¹) [*v. supra*, p. 347, No. 387.]

(²) [*cp. supra*, p. 339, No. 378, note (³)]

(³) [For Sir Edward Grey's reply, *v. infra*, p. 355, No. 398.]

No. 397.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir R. Rodd.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 54888/49385/13/44.

(No. 305.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, December 3, 1913.

The Italian Ambassador asked me to-day about the stir that was being made on the subject of the command of the "Corps d'Armée" in Constantinople by a German Officer. The Ambassador said that he supposed that apprehension was felt that, if any Power had difficulties with Turkey, that Power would be brought into conflict with the German Officer.

I said that no doubt this was one point, but the effective executive command of the Constantinople Army Corps by a German Officer would involve the control of the Straits and other things. The Ambassador would remember the trouble that there had been between Russia and England in past years about the Straits.⁽²⁾ He could imagine what Russian feelings would have been had English Officers been given the executive command of the force that controlled the Straits; and the control of that force by any other foreign Power would naturally be very disagreeable to Russia. I was trying to find out exactly what was proposed: it was hardly credible to me that the proposal could be exactly what was alleged; but, if so, it would cause great disturbance.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

(¹) [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

(²) [*cp. infra*, p. 358, No. 403, note (²).]

No. 398.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir L. Mallet.

F.O. 54670/49385/13/44.

Tel. (No. 560.)

Foreign Office, December 4, 1913, 1.40 P.M.

Your telegram No. 601 of Dec[ember] 3⁽¹⁾: (German General at C[onstantino]ple.)

Our communication should be founded solely on the assumption that German General is to have effective executive command of Constantinople Army Corps, a position that no foreign officer has ever had before.

We can take no exception to German General having any position that Von der Goltz had.

(1) [*v. supra*, p. 351, No. 396]

No. 399.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir L. Mallet.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 55404/49385/13/44.

Tel. (No. 561.)

Foreign Office, December 4, 1913, 5 P.M.

Russian Gov[ernmen]t have asked us to postpone making any representations at Const[antino]ple in regard to German General as they are in friendly communication with German Gov[ernmen]t on the subject. You should therefore not act upon instructions until you hear further from me.

(1) [This telegram was drafted after a conversation between Sir A. Nicolson and M de Etter. Sir A. Nicolson's report is minuted by Sir Edward Grey: "Certainly the instruction to Sir L. Mallet must be suspended. The Russian changes of mood are extraordinary. E. G." *cp. supra*, p. 347, No. 387.]

No. 400.

*Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.**Constantinople, December 4, 1913.*

F.O. 54823/49385/13/44.

Tel. (No. 602.)

D. 5.5 P.M.

R. 6.45 P.M.

Your telegram No. 557 of Dec[ember] 2.⁽¹⁾

Russian Ambassador has been instructed to defer action pending a communication which is being made in Berlin. He expects authority to-morrow.

In the meantime Russian Ambassador in London speaks in a telegram repeated to Russian Embassy of an identic note: French Ambassador is not authorised to address a note, but only verbal communication and enquiry, to the Porte, and has telegraphed for further instructions.

Russian Ambassador is also telegraphing to Russian Government, but is indifferent as to form of *démarche*.

I think that verbal communication would be greatly preferable as a first step, especially as we are uncertain of our facts.

Straits of Dardanelles are not within command of 1st Army Corps, and military attaché states that the Bosphorus is also excluded.

(1) [*v. supra*, p. 347, No. 387.]

MINUTE

This has crossed our tel[egram] No 561⁽²⁾ of yesterday.

R. G. V.
Dec[ember] 5
G. R. C.
5 xii 13
E. A. C.
Dec[ember] 5
A. N.
E G.

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

No. 401.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 54883/49385/13/44. *St. Petersburg, D. December 4, 1913, 9·10 P.M.*
Tel. (No. 403.) *R. December 5, 1913, 11 A.M.*

My telegram No. 400 of Dec[ember] 3.⁽²⁾

The Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs informs me that instructions have been sent to the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople in the sense of your telegram No. 557 of Dec[ember] 2⁽³⁾ to Constantinople, but the Ambassador has been told to suspend acting on these instructions until he receives a further communication from the Russian Government.

In addition to the statement of the German Chargé d'Affaires reported in my above-mentioned telegram, the German Government intimated, through the Russian Ambassador at Berlin their readiness to reconsider the question of the German Commandant at Constantinople on receiving the German General's report. The Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs has expressed thanks for this communication and informed the German Government that he proposes to make certain representations at Constantinople, which would, he thinks, tend to facilitate a reconsideration. The Minister for Foreign Affairs, before proceeding further, wishes to see what answer the German Government return. If the latter are inclined to make concessions, he is anxious to do nothing which could indispose them.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Constantinople (as No. 562).]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 353, No. 394.]

⁽³⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 347, No. 387.]

No. 402.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 55451/49385/13/44.
(No. 987.)

Constantinople, D. December 4, 1913.
R. December 9, 1913.

Sir :—

With reference to my telegrams Nos. 601 and 602 of the 3rd⁽¹⁾ and 4th instant⁽²⁾ respectively, I have the honour to enclose a despatch addressed to me by the Military Attaché on the subject of General Liman von Sanders' appointment to be a member of the Superior Military Council.

⁽¹⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 354, No. 396.]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 355, No. 400.]

Both my Russian and French Colleagues are disposed to regard this appointment as of equal, if not of greater importance, than the appointment to the command of the First Army Corps and logically speaking this view seems to be correct. If the General obtains influence and gains the confidence of the Turkish Government, it is probable that his voice will be listened to in the deliberations of the Council and it is conceivable that it might prevail in questions affecting British or other foreign interests.

It would probably be very difficult if not impossible to obtain the cancellation of this nomination, especially as Marshal von der Goltz held the appointment of Vice President of this Council without any objection being raised so far as we are aware.

I am therefore of opinion that it would be better not to raise this point at present. If the General were transferred to the Adrianople Army Corps, much of the objection would disappear because he would no longer be resident in Constantinople.

I have, &c.

LOUIS MALLET.

Enclosure in No. 402.

Lieutenant-Colonel Tyrrell to Sir L. Mallet.

(No. 43.)

Sir:—

On the question whether it is advisable that General Liman von Sanders should be a member of the Shura-i-Astin (Superior Military Council) I have the honour to inform you that such is the present intention, and seeing that he is the Chief of a Mission which is invited to reorganise, train and instruct the Turkish Army, it seems natural and almost inevitable that he should be a member of this council, which is a sort of Committee of Senior Generals under the Presidency of the Minister of War, to examine military questions placed before it by the Minister, and which also deals with the promotion of officers to Generals' ranks and with the appointments to the higher commands.

It is true that as a member he might suggest or initiate dispositions of Army Corps, movements of troops and appointments of officers in furtherance of German political ideas, whereas if he were not officially a member he would not have the *locus standi* to do so.

On the other hand nothing can prevent the Turks calling him in to consult, or from referring the most important and vital questions of military policy to him, and even if he were not a member it would probably be an easy matter for him to have suggestions brought forward in the Council in such a way that the Turks would feel bound to give them every consideration.

As a matter of fact the Shura-i-Astin is not a very formidable assembly and I feel sure that more time is wasted there than business done, while all points of importance are really suggested and decided by the General Staff in consultation with the Minister of War, against whose collective wisdom the few old Generals who meet once a week or so would never emit a contrary opinion.

I therefore think that the objection to General Liman being a member of the Council is a purely technical one which it would do more harm than good to raise, especially as Marshal von der Goltz was Vice-President of this same Council,⁽³⁾ and was never objected to as such.

I have, &c.

E. TYRRELL.

⁽³⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 339, No. 378, and *note* ⁽³⁾.]

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.

Constantinople, December 5, 1913.

F.O. 54955/49385/13/44.

D. 8 P.M.

Tel. (No. 603.)

R. 10.45 P.M.

Your telegram No. 561 of Dec[ember] 4.⁽¹⁾

I am glad to hear that the question is still under friendly discussion at Berlin. My Russian colleague told me that a further communication had been made, but I gathered from him that it was merely of the nature of a notification that Russia would now address herself to the Porte, probably in conjunction with others. Perhaps there is another communication.

Advantages of a friendly settlement appear to be very great. If our representations here meet with a rebuff question of compensation must arise as indicated in our instructions, otherwise it would be better not to take so formal a step. Force of circumstances might possibly compel the Russian Government to ask for opening of Straits, although this is unlikely. I would point out that conditions which we laid down in 1908 included consent of Porte (see your telegram No. 358 of 16th October, 1908).⁽²⁾ Situation has changed since then; agreement without Turkish consent would have a most serious moral effect here. I cannot suggest any special compensation for which we could ask, Admiral Limpus already having command of the fleet, a point which is likely to be made much of by Turks and Germans and which is theoretically a good one.

Question of compensation must open very big issues, and feeling is already bitter here about supposed action of Triple *Entente*. I am not convinced from conversations I have had with Russian Ambassador that he has considered possible results, and I beg in this connection to refer you to my private telegram of yesterday.⁽³⁾ If Porte replies that Straits of Dardanelles and Bosphorus are not under command of 1st Army Corps, and that "rayon militaire" is separate from command of troops, and if Russian Government accepted this as satisfactory, then it does not seem necessary to make identic representations, because facts about Straits are already known, and separation of "rayon" from command is, I am also assured, a fact.

Military attaché, whose report is on its way to you, does not attach much practical importance to the appointment to 1st Army Corps. He thinks that general would be more hampered in that position than if he came as adviser only.

More seems to depend upon the personality of the man and the influence which he will be able to exercise than on the position he will hold. If, like Sir R. Crawford, he gains the confidence of the Turks, then he will be very powerful in any position, and will be able to exercise great influence in superior council of war—an influence which might be used with effect against our interests, both Egyptian and in the Gulf regions.

Both my Russian colleague and my French colleague attach the greatest importance to this, but it is admitted that we could not object after having accepted Von der Goltz as vice-president of that council, however different the circumstances may now be. I think, unless all three Powers are prepared to see the matter through, it would be better to limit ourselves to enquiry, not necessarily in identic terms, and then to consider further action.

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 355, No. 399.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. V, p. 452, No. 388. On the negotiations of 1908 generally, *v. ibid.*, pp. 881-2, and Vol. IX (I), p. 860, SUBJECT INDEX, *sub* STRAITS—BOSPHORUS AND DARDANELLES. The most important documents are those given in Vol. V, p. 441, No. 377; pp. 451-2, No. 387; p. 456, No. 394. *cp.* also Vol. IX (I), p. 311, *Ed. note.*]

⁽³⁾ [Sir L. Mallet's private telegram of December 4, 1913, reported his conversation on December 4 with the French and Russian Ambassadors at Constantinople. It is not reproduced as a fuller report is given *infra*, p. 360, No. 405. (Grey MSS, Vol. 41)]

MINUTES.

I think we can wait a further comm[unicatio]n from St. Petersburg before telegraphing to Sir L. Mallet. I had no idea that Adm[ira]l Limpus *commanded* the fleet.⁽¹⁾ I thought he was merely there as adviser and instructor. If the fact be as stated by Sir L. Mallet we are not on perfectly unassailable ground in demurring to the app[ointmen]t of the German Gen[era]l.

A. N.

I have looked at Adm[ira]l Limpus' contract and find that he is named Commander of the fleet and naval adviser. There is of course a clause that he is not to perform active service in time of war. I do not deny that there is a difference between commander of an inefficient navy and that of C[ommander] in C[hief] of the Garrison of the capital. Still a point could be made against us

A. N.

I did not realize the nature of Admiral Limpus's command. We must certainly go very carefully. Bring up on Monday.⁽²⁾

E. G.

7.12.13.

⁽¹⁾ [*cp. infra*, p. 367, No. 414, *note* (1), where an extract is given from Admiral Limpus' contract. The text of the contract in the original was initialled by Sir A. Nicolson.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. infra*, p. 363, No. 409.]

No. 401.

Sir M. de Bunsen to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 55205/18799/13/44.

(No. 190.)

Vienna, D. December 5, 1913.

Sir,

R. December 8, 1913.

. . . . ⁽²⁾ As regards the German Military Mission to Constantinople, and the impending assumption by the German General of the Command of the 1st Turkish Army Corps, His Excellency⁽³⁾ states that this arrangement is in no wise to be ascribed to German initiative, or pressure from Berlin, but solely to the absolute necessity which exists for the employment of the best European methods with a view to restoring discipline and general efficiency to the Turkish Army. Turkey having hitherto relied on German help for this purpose, and the Turkish troops being now accustomed to German ways, it was natural, Hilmi Pasha thinks, to have recourse once more to the assistance of German officers. If this time they were to be invested with actual command of an army corps, this was because there was no other way of making their authority paramount, and of thus putting an end in the only possible way, to the deplorable state of indiscipline now prevailing. His Excellency points to the immense power exercised in Greece by the French Military Mission although the latter does not actually take command of the troops, and he thinks that the employment by Turkey of Hobart Pasha, who exercised command in the Turkish Navy in the seventies, is a parallel to the present case. At all events he maintains that, if the new arrangement is to be the subject of protest by one or more Powers, such protest must be made, not at Berlin but at Constantinople.

The new Russian Ambassador has not yet arrived, but I hear that the Russian Embassy is much concerned at the appointment of the German General, mainly on

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King.]

⁽²⁾ [For the opening paragraphs of this despatch *v. supra*, pp. 71-2, No. 87.]

⁽³⁾ [*i.e.*, Hussein Hilmi Pasha, Turkish Ambassador at Vienna, 1912-8.]

account of the probability that the latter will pay special attention to the necessity of bringing the fortifications of the Bosphorus up to modern standards, and of thus rendering Constantinople practically impregnable from the North.

I have, &c.

MAURICE DE BUNSEN.

No. 405.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Private.⁽²⁾

Dear Sir Edward :—

Constantinople, December 5, 1913.

The German Military Mission has suddenly become the absorbing topic: Giers never mentioned the matter to me, nor did Bompard, until last Monday, when the latter said that he did not much like the idea of representations, and did not think the Mission a matter of importance. When I got your instructions I went round at once to see Bompard and we visited Giers together to arrange the identic representation. We had a long talk, and both came away feeling that Giers was very vague as to what he wanted and ignorant of some important facts. We were surprised when he said that he would be satisfied if the command were separated from the rayon militaire, but when we told him that this was already the case, he did not seem to think it enough. He thought the appointment to the Conseil Supérieur much more important, at one moment, than the command, but I told him that von der Goltz had been President of the Council, and then we all agreed that we could not object to that. When we asked Giers about compensation, he said that he had no idea what we could ask for. The command of an army corps in the Eastern Vilayets for a Russian was jestingly proposed, whereupon Bompard said, also in jest, that he would ask for the command of an Army Corps in Syria.

I said nothing, knowing that we already had command of the Turkish fleet, and had just secured a monopoly of dockyards and arsenals for 30 years.⁽³⁾ I was therefore very glad when I got your telegram yesterday⁽⁴⁾ to say that friendly communications were passing in Berlin and I much hope that the question will be amicably arranged.

I found Bompard also much relieved. He said that he felt we were being dragged into another fiasco as bad as Adrianople, and that we should either sustain a rebuff or have to go through with it to the end and get some serious compensation which would open up some very big questions.

On hearing then that discussions were still proceeding at Berlin I thought it worth while to telegraph some of the objections which might be urged against an identic démarche⁽⁵⁾ but I daresay they were already present in your mind. It is possible, of course, that you are in possession of information to show that our action will make things easier for Berlin instead of more difficult.

The Turks themselves are much perturbed at the idea, and I have received some indirect entreaties not to spoil their last chance of having a decent army. I do not know whether either the Germans or the Turks had any political motive in this move but I venture to think that practically it would not much matter if the former had the command of the 1st Army Corps. Of course if we can get the General moved to Adrianople all the better.

I shall be sorry however if it affects the chance of our retaining command of the Fleet because that is about our only asset in this country. I shall be still more sorry if the Government is weakened by it, as in my opinion they deserve encourage-

⁽¹⁾ [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Sir A. Nicolson; to Sir E. Crowe.]

⁽²⁾ [Grey MSS., Vol. 41.]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. infra*, p. 362, No. 407, and *note* (3).]

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 355, No. 399.]

⁽⁵⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 358, No. 403.]

ment and what sympathy we can give them. I think it remarkable that they should have come out as well as they have considering what they have gone through in the last two years. The mere work which they do is colossal, and this must not be forgotten when there are delays in some questions like the riverain concession. . . .⁽⁶⁾

Yours sincerely,

LOUIS MALLET.

⁽⁶⁾ [The remaining paragraphs of this letter are omitted as they deal with personal matters. The riverain concession was the grant of rights of navigation on the Tigris and the Euphrates to the British Tigris and Euphrates Company, concerning which a declaration was signed in London on December 10, 1913. (F.O. 50020/6463/13/44; 51512/6463/13/44; 54601/6463/13/44; 54663/6463/13/44.)]

No. 406.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

St. Petersburg, December 7, 1913.

F.O. 55115/49385/13/44.

D. 2 P.M.

Tel. (No. 404.)

R. 3.45 P.M.

In view of the publication of the *iradé* appointing General von Sanders,⁽²⁾ the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs has telegraphed to Berlin⁽³⁾ to the effect that he supposes that this step was taken without the concurrence of the German Government. If the answer received is not satisfactory, he will consider his *pourparlers* at Berlin at an end, and that the time has come to make identic representations at Constantinople in the sense of your telegram No. 557 of Dec[ember] 2⁽⁴⁾ to Constantinople, with slight changes which have now become necessary.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs considers that it is impossible for the three Powers to allow themselves to be defeated in this question. If the intended representations are without effect, he would propose the use of all means of pressure on Turkey, as financial boycott, refusal of the 4 per cent. customs increase, and even rupture of diplomatic relations. He has great faith in the efficacy of such measures, but if they fail, he thinks that the three Powers must be prepared to take active steps such as the occupation of Turkish ports in the Mediterranean and Black Sea. He does not believe that Germany would treat this as a course unfriendly to herself.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Constantinople (as No. 566).]

⁽²⁾ [*cp.* reference to issue of the *iradé* at the end of October, *supra*, p. 349, No. 391, *encl.* Sir L. Mallet was asked on December 8, telegram (No. 565), D. 5.30 P.M., to report the contents of the *iradé*. (F.O. 55115/49385/13/44.) He reported, on December 10, telegram (No. 608), D. 10.45 A.M., R. 1 P.M., that it was impossible to see the document which was in the keeping of the Grand Vizier. He said further that according to the German Ambassador it consisted of six lines, appointing General Liman von Sanders "inspector of schools, member of the Superior Council of War and Commander of the 1st Army Corps." (*cp.* *G.P.*, XXXVIII, pp. 204-5.) He stated that the meaning of the *iradé* was "that the Sovereign had assented to the matter proceeding, and this had occurred, but it had not been published." (F.O. 55757/49385/13/44.)]

⁽³⁾ [*cp.* *G.P.*, XXXVIII, pp. 208-11.]

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 347, No. 387.]

No. 407.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 56140/48901/13/44.

(No. 994.)

Constantinople, D. December 8, 1913.

Sir,

R. December 13, 1913.

I have the honour to enclose an article which has appeared in the Journal "*La Turquie*" on the work accomplished by Admiral Limpus in the material and moral reorganisation of the Turkish Fleet.⁽²⁾ Admiral Limpus confirms the information

⁽¹⁾ [A copy of this despatch was sent to the Admiralty.]

⁽²⁾ [Not reproduced.]

which I receive from every source to the effect that the Turkish Government are resolved to create a navy which will put them in a position to hold their own with the Greek Fleet and if the men composing the present Government remain in power, and the financial situation makes it possible, it is not unlikely that they will succeed. The concession to Armstrong-Vickers for the reorganisation of the existing dockyards in the Golden Horn and for the creation of dockyards at Ismid where the fleet is eventually to be stationed is part and parcel of their policy and I would call attention to the clauses in the concession of which a copy has doubtless been furnished to the Foreign Office,⁽³⁾ bearing upon the periods within which the firm undertakes to be in a position to accept orders for construction in the Ottoman yards.

The question of the power confided to Admiral Limpus, which includes command of the fleet, and of the importance of the dockyard concession is much dwelt upon in the Press and in political circles here at the present moment in connection with the intention with which the Triple *Entente* is credited of opposing a firm and united resistance to the appointment of a German General to the command of the first Army Corps. If this intention is realised, it is possible that the Triple Alliance may take up the matter of the command of the fleet when the term for which Admiral Limpus was engaged closes in April next.⁽⁴⁾

Apart from the effect on British prestige here, it would be a severe blow both morally and materially to the Turkish Government if the powers accorded to the British Admiral were curtailed and it would be regarded by the Turkish Government as but one more proof of the want of interest taken by Great Britain in this country.⁽⁵⁾

I have reason to believe that Admiral Limpus is not desirous of renewing his contract, if there is a prospect of advancement in the British Service and that he would only do so if pressed by His Majesty's Government.

It will be unfortunate, if he withdraws, but in that event I would venture to suggest that an Officer be chosen to replace him whose natural retirement from the active list of the British Navy would fall some time within the period of his engagement with the Turkish Service, so that he might continue in it after the expiration of his contract if it were so desired.

I have, &c.

LOUIS MALLET.

MINUTE⁽⁶⁾

Nor do I think the idea of choosing as Admiral Limpus' successor an officer on the verge of retirement a good one. To organize the Turkish fleet is a task requiring the best abilities of a first-rate officer. Such an officer would not be found among the candidates for early retirement. The Germans send the pick of their army officers for services of this kind (General von der Goltz in Turkey, General Meckel in Japan).

E. A. C.
Dec[ember] 16
A. N.
E. G.

⁽³⁾ [In his despatch (No. 462) of December 23, 1913, Sir Edward Grey asked Sir L. Mallet for a copy of this concession. (F.O. 56140/48901/13/44.) It was sent as an enclosure in Sir L. Mallet's despatch (No. 36), D. January 21, 1914, R. January 26, 1914. (F.O. 3546/367/14/44)]

⁽⁴⁾ [*cp. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (I), p. 282, *Ed. note.*]

⁽⁵⁾ [There are important reports, both diplomatic and military, from Count Pallavicini, &c., from Constantinople on December 8, 1913. v. *Ö.-U.A.*, VII, pp. 632-9, Nos. 9069-71.]

⁽⁶⁾ [Sir Eyre Crowe's minute is preceded by one by Mr. Vansittart, which is not reproduced from considerations of space. It concluded as follows: "The effect of now curtailing Admiral Limpus' powers w[oul]d certainly have the effect foreshadowed by Sir L. Mallet"]

[*ED. NOTE.*—On December 8, 1913, Count Benckendorff communicated a copy of M. Šverbeiev's telegram of December 6 and M. Sazonov's telegram of the following day. (F.O. 55735/49385/13/44.) The latter comprised the text of the proposed draft note to the Porte. *cp. Siebert*, p. 681. Reference is made to it also *infra*, pp. 384-5, No. 432.]

No. 408.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir L. Mallet.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 55987/49385/13/44.

Tel. (No. 570.)

Foreign Office, December 9, 1913, 7 P.M.

Russian M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] now desires that a communication about German command should be made at Constantinople.

I think communication should be made separately by each Ambassador, should be verbal and should be in the form of an enquiry.

Substance of communication might I think be as follows.

Reports have reached us that an effective executive military command of very far reaching and important nature has been given to a German General at Constantinople, which would place him in a position different from that ever held yet by any foreign officer in Turkey.

We assume that Turkey would not do anything that would impair independence of Turkish Gov[ernment] or Turkish control of Constantinople and the Straits, but as these are matters of great interest to other Powers we should like information as to the contract which the Turkish Gov[ernment] has made with the German General, the scope of his functions and what the Turkish Gov[ernment] understand his position to be.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Paris (Nos. 441-2); to St. Petersburg (Nos. 786-7); with the instructions "You should inform Minister for Foreign Affairs" A paraphrase was sent to M. Paul Cambon and to Count Benckendorff. *cp. D.D.F., 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VIII, p. 758, No. 603; Siebert, pp. 683-1.*]

No. 409.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir L. Mallet.

F.O. 55998/49385/13/44.

Tel. (No. 571.)

Foreign Office, December 9, 1913, 7.30 P.M.

German Chargé d'Affaires has volunteered a statement to me about German Military Command at Constantinople; he represents it as corresponding to position of Admiral Limpus in the Turkish Navy.

I should like to know, when you have full information with regard to appointment of German General, whether it is fairly analogous to position of Admiral Limpus.⁽¹⁾

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 358-9, No. 403, and *min.*, and *note* (4).]

No. 410.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 55998/49385/13/44.

(No. 363.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, December 9, 1913.

The German Chargé d'Affaires said to-day⁽²⁾ that, as there had been so much newspaper controversy about the German military command in Constantinople, he thought that he had better speak to me about it.⁽³⁾

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. G.P., XXXVIII, pp. 245-7.*]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. Sir Edward Grey's comment to Count Benckendorff that Herr von Kühlmann "took the initiative." v. Siebert, pp. 682-3.*]

I said that there had been more than newspaper controversy, for I understood that the question had been discussed between the Russian and German Governments. I had adopted the view that we could not take exception to German officers going to succeed General von der Goltz and taking the same positions in Constantinople after the war as German officers had had before the war.

Herr von Kühlmann said that this was all that was desired, but so many obstacles had been put in the way of General von der Goltz that, while as Adviser he was held responsible for bad results, he really had no responsibility, as his advice was not carried out. The new German general was therefore to be in a position to ensure that, when he ordered a drill to take place, it did take place; and, as all the military schools were in Constantinople, it was there that he must be placed. Herr von Kühlmann thought that the position was analogous to the command that Admiral Limpus had of the Turkish fleet.

I said that I was not sure what the position of Admiral Limpus was. I imagined that he was a non-combatant in the sense that, if active operations took place in a war, he would not be allowed to take part in them.

Herr von Kühlmann assumed that this would apply also to the German general.

I told him that my idea was that, as the Turks had made the contract for the German command, we should point out to the Turks that anything that affected the Straits or the independence of the Turkish Government was a matter of interest to other Powers, and therefore should ask them exactly what their contract with the German general was, what was the scope of his powers, and what the Turks understood his position to be.

Herr von Kühlmann said that he thought this would be a natural enquiry.

I said that the Russians had been very much disturbed, and not unnaturally, by the report that a Foreign officer was to have actual command of the German [*sic*] army corps in Constantinople. The nearest analogy was the command of the Persian Cossacks, the only military force in Tehran, by Russian officers, which had put them in a position to decide the fate of the Shah.

Herr von Kühlmann said that this was quite true as regards Tehran, where he had himself been for two years, but the Turks would never allow any foreign officer to have this control of their forces.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

No. 411.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 55999/49885/13/44.

(No. 745.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, December 9, 1913.

With reference to the identic note⁽²⁾ that M. Sazonof proposed should be communicated in Constantinople about the German command of the Constantinople Army Corps, M. Cambon expressed to me to-day the opinion that it would be much better at this stage not to hand in a note, but to make the enquiry and observations that I had suggested last week.⁽³⁾

I said that I was in favour of this course, but some of the observations that I had proposed to make would have to be qualified, for I understood now that the Constantinople Army Corps was not the force that controlled the Straits.⁽⁴⁾

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 362, *Ed. note*, and *infra*, pp. 384-5, No. 432.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 347, No. 387; p. 348, No. 390. *cp. D.D.F.*, 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VIII, p. 754, No. 600]

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. Siebert*, pp. 681-3, where the texts are given of M. Sazonov's telegram of December 7 and of Count Benckendorff's reply on the 9th.]

M. Cambon said that, at any rate, we could raise this point, and leave the Turks to give the explanation.

I promised that, after I had seen Count Benckendorff this afternoon, I would let M. Cambon know what instructions I would send to Sir Louis Mallet.⁽⁵⁾ I observed that the Russians had varied so much about this question, at one time wanting a strong line taken, and then wanting us to suspend the instruction that we had sent, that I thought we must proceed very cautiously.⁽⁶⁾

[I am, &c.]
E. G[REY].

⁽⁵⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 363, No. 408; *infra*, pp. 370-1, No. 417, and *note* (1); p. 379, No. 426; p. 382, No. 430.]

⁽⁶⁾ [M. Sazonov seems to have heard of this interview "from a very secret source," v. telegrams to Count Benckendorff of December 12, 1913, *Siebert*, pp. 687-8.]

No. 412.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 56840/49385/13/44.

(No. 375.)

St. Petersburg, D. December 9, 1913.

Sir:—

R. December 15, 1913.

It is unnecessary to say that the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs has been deeply preoccupied during the past few days by the question of the appointment of General Liman von Sanders to command the First Turkish Army Corps. The extreme importance which Mr. Sazonow attaches to this matter has led him to speak to me on the general question of the present political arrangements between Russia, France, and Great Britain more seriously and with greater openness than on any previous occasion that I can remember. He said that the question which had now arisen at Constantinople would afford a test of the real value of the Triple Entente. The three Powers had hitherto never taken an absolutely decided stand on any particular point (meaning, I think, in the course of the recent Balkan complications). If they did so he believed that Germany would give way. To be entirely frank, Mr. Sazonow continued, he thought that Germany had probably weighed the chances of a military conflict between the Triple Alliance and France and Russia, and was prepared to run the risk; but that she would not face the additional and incalculable danger of a naval conflict with Great Britain, which might result in the total destruction of her maritime commerce. I may say that in thus speaking of the decisive importance of British naval power I believe that Mr. Sazonow has in mind, like many other Russians that I have spoken to, the effect which the attitude of His Majesty's Government produced in the Franco-German difficulties of 1905/6 and 1911.⁽²⁾

In the course of a long conversation which I had with Mr. Sazonow on the 6th instant I pointed out to him, in accordance with the instructions contained in your telegram No. 780 of the 2nd instant,⁽³⁾ the fact that Russia was the Power of the Triple Entente chiefly concerned in the present question, and I endeavoured to form an opinion as to how far the Russian Government would be prepared to go in order to safeguard their interests.

Mr. Sazonow stated most emphatically that it was not possible for the Three Powers to allow themselves to be defeated on the question of a German Officer having command at Constantinople. Of this I believe him to be quite convinced. He said

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet. A copy was sent to Berlin.]

⁽²⁾ [These subjects are treated in *Gooch & Temperley*, Vols. III and VII.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 347, No. 388.]

that if General von Sanders commanded the First Army Corps there would be only one Great Power left (in Near Eastern affairs) and that would be Germany. He does not attach exaggerated importance to the military aspect of the proposed appointment, but he considers that it would give Germany complete political preponderance at Constantinople; and when one remembers what Constantinople means to Russia, it would evidently be unsafe to infer that because the Russian Government refused to risk a war for questions such as those of Scutari and Durazzo they would do the same in the present case.

Mr. Sazonow appeared to regard it as a matter of course that, if the representations which the three Powers are now about to make at Constantinople remain without effect they will resort to means of pressure on Turkey such as a financial boycott and a refusal to agree to a 4 % increase in the Turkish customs; and he mentioned also a Russian mobilisation on the Armenian frontier, though adding that climatic conditions would render that impossible before the Spring. Mr. Sazonow maintained strongly, when I expressed doubts on the subject, that the financial pressure which the Three Powers could bring to bear on Turkey would be likely to prove efficacious. As a further step he mentioned the recall of the three Ambassadors. I reminded His Excellency of the grounds on which His Majesty's Government had objected to that course when it was proposed in August last, but he insisted rather strongly on the idea, saying that *Chargés d'Affaires* might remain at Constantinople when the Ambassadors left.

Finally Mr. Sazonow said that if milder methods of pressure failed the Three Powers must be prepared to take strong measures and he suggested the occupation of Turkish ports, for instance of Smyrna and Beirut respectively by Great Britain and France, and of Trebizond by Russia. He spoke as if the Russian Government would be ready to go to that length and indeed appeared to regard some action of the kind as a necessary corollary of the steps which the Three Powers would previously have taken. At the same time, when I referred to the critical situation which would then arise vis-à-vis of Germany, Mr. Sazonow maintained that Germany need not necessarily regard the course taken by the Three Powers as unfriendly to herself. I cannot therefore say that the Minister for Foreign Affairs has definitely contemplated the prospect of a breach with Germany, but there can be no doubt as to the serious view which he takes of the difficulty which has now arisen; and he is at any rate inclined to take measures in regard to it which would of themselves be likely to lead to a very delicate situation.

I have, &c.

HUGH O'BEIRNE.

MINUTES

This extends what Mr. O'Beirne told us by tel[egram] ⁽⁴⁾ But it goes rather further in emphasising M. Sazonow's very serious view of the question.

Unfortunately he is as wobbly as ever. He suggests extreme measures of pressure, which, he affects to believe, Germany would not regard as unfriendly (ridiculous! see 56359⁽⁵⁾), but Mr. O'Beirne still does not know if he definitely contemplates a breach with Germany, (Is this a euphemism for war?) if everything else fails.

M. Sazonow is very difficult to deal with.

And his opinions almost incredibly jejune.

R. G. V.
Dec[ember] 15.
G. R. C.
15.xii.13.

E. A. C.
Dec[ember] 15
A. N.
E. G.

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 361, No. 406.]

⁽⁵⁾ [*v. infra*, pp. 374-5, No. 423.]

No. 413.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 56342/49885/13/44.

(No. 377.)

St. Petersburg, D. December 9, 1913.

Sir :—

R. December 15, 1913.

I had some conversation yesterday with the German Ambassador on the subject of General von Sanders' mission to Turkey. Count Pourtalès, who evidently expressed the official view at Berlin, said that he could not understand why so much importance was attached to this question and that it was extremely regrettable that it should have been ventilated in the Press. General von Sanders' appointment was very similar to that of the English Admiral who commanded the Turkish Fleet. He would in reality hold a less important position than had General von der Goltz, for the latter as Inspector-General really had the whole Turkish Army in his hands whilst General von Sanders would only command an Army Corps. The Turkish Government in making the appointment had merely exercised Turkey's rights as a Sovereign State with which no one could interfere.

Count Pourtalès has I know made the most of the analogy of the British Admiral in his conversations with the Minister for Foreign Affairs. Mr. Sazonow mentioned this matter to me recently, saying that the work which the Admiral was doing was a serious thing for Russia and that M. de Giers had called his attention to it. I said that the Turks were resolved to have a fleet strong enough to cope with the Greeks, and if we refused to organise it for them it was perfectly obvious that it would be organised by other Powers. I could understand his objections if there was any question of the Turkish fleet seriously threatening Russia's naval position in the Black Sea, but that was really too remote a contingency to be considered at present.

I have, &c.

HUGH O'BEIRNE.

(1) [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet; and as having been seen at Berlin.]

No. 414.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾*Constantinople, December 10, 1913.*

F.O. 55766/49885/13/44.

D. 4.55 P.M.

Tel. (No. 609.)

R. 5.55 P.M.

Your telegram No. 571 of Dec[ember] 9.⁽²⁾

The admiral has the absolute command of the Turkish fleet in time of peace, as reported in my telegram No. 602 of Dec[ember] 4.⁽³⁾

Please see article 1 of his contract, which was sent home, and Sir G. Lowther's No. 474 of 2nd June, 1912.⁽⁴⁾

(1) [This telegram was sent to St. Petersburg (as No. 790), and to Paris "in sections."]

(2) [*v. supra*, p. 363, No. 409.]

(3) [*v. supra*, p. 355, No. 400. This telegram, however, does not give the information cited. The reference should probably be to telegram (No. 603) of December 5. *v. supra*, p. 358, No. 403.]

(4) [Sir G. Lowther's despatch (No. 474), D. June 2, 1912, R. June 10, 1912, enclosed a copy of Admiral Limpus' contract. Article I was as follows: "L'Amiral Limpus est chargé d'introduire les réformes nécessaires, conformément au progrès moderne, dans la flotte, dans le Département de la Marine et dans les écoles navales, afin de développer et de relever le niveau actuel de la Marine Impériale Ottomane. Il est commandant de la flotte et Conseiller naval." (F.O. 24541/1330/12/44.) Reference to Admiral Limpus' contract is given in *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (I), p. 282, *Ed. note.*]

Williams and Gamble had the same powers. He can do anything except break the law or exceed the budget.

The concession just obtained, giving us control over the dockyards and arsenals for thirty years,⁽⁵⁾ makes it all the more difficult for us to take a strong line. In practice, moreover, I believe that the command of the 1st Army Corps will be entirely innocuous to our interests.

I certainly prefer a verbal enquiry, as proposed in your telegram No. 570 of Dec[ember] 9,⁽⁶⁾ if, for international reasons, it is necessary for us to join in a representation to the Turkish Government.

But it will be hard for me to meet the reply which is sure to be made as to our command of the fleet and control over the arsenals. This is all known here and is the subject of much comment. I cannot but think, moreover, that the report of an identic *démarche*, which is causing much excitement and even consternation here, will make it much more difficult for Turkey and Germany to yield.

Would it be possible for His Majesty's Government to attempt some kind of mediation on the basis of an assurance from the German Government that the German general will, after, say, one month here to study local conditions, propose either to remove the command to Adrianople or be content with the position of adviser, or some other expedient which Russia could accept? It would be necessary to ascertain Russia's minimum demands, and I cannot do that here.

My Russian and French colleagues have received instructions to present a written identic note in the form proposed in your telegram No. 557 of Dec[ember] 2,⁽⁷⁾ with some alterations.

I am not consulting them about the verbal enquiry suggested in your telegram under reply until I receive a reply to this telegram.⁽⁸⁾

(Confidential.)

My French colleague, who deeply deplores the whole affair, and who has repeatedly told his Government that he attaches no importance whatever to the command of the German general, has been instructed to make suggestions to the French Government respecting the compensation which France shall claim if the Turks do not give way.

He has sent a list of alternatives.

I much hope that if the case arises we shall, in justice to Turkey, abstain from demanding anything.

Effect of extensive demands by France and Russia may be subversive.

MINUTE.

There is one important point to be noted in the contract: ⁽²⁴⁵⁴¹⁾⁽⁹⁾₁₂ Admiral Limpus, although in command of the Fleet, is placed under the orders of the Minister of Marine. It would be interesting to know under whose orders the German General is to be. That is a question to which it will be useful to extend the ambassadors' enquiry.

E. A. C.
Dec[ember] 11.
A. N.
E. G.

⁽⁵⁾ [The reference is to Article VII of the concession to Armstrong Vickers, *cp. supra* p. 362, No. 407, and *note* ⁽³⁾.]

⁽⁶⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 363, No. 408.]

⁽⁷⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 347, No. 387.]

⁽⁸⁾ [*cp. infra*, pp. 370-1, No. 417, and *note* ⁽¹⁾.]

⁽⁹⁾ [*cp. supra*, *note* ⁽⁴⁾. The 3rd Article of Admiral Limpus' contract was as follows: "L'Amiral ainsi que les officiers spécialistes seront pendant tout le temps que durera leur service en Turquie, sous les ordres du Ministre de la Marine. Ils porteront l'uniforme Ottomane suivant leur grade." (F.O. 24541/1330/12/44.)]

[*ED. NOTE.*—On December 10, 1913, the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople telegraphed to M. Sazonov that the real Russian purpose was to remove the German General from Constantinople and it was therefore difficult to avoid complications. Baron von Wangenheim, the German Ambassador, had suggested the transference of Admiral Limpus from Constantinople to Ismid, *v. infra*, pp. 372-3, Nos. 419-20, and *Siebert*, pp. 686-7.]

No. 415.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

St. Petersburg, December 10, 1913.

F.O. 55771/49385/13/44.

D. 7.48 P.M.

Tel. (No. 408.)

R. 10 P.M.

Your telegram No. 442 of Dec[ember] 9⁽²⁾ to Paris.

Minister for Foreign Affairs could not receive me, but I communicated to Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs text of statement which you propose three Ambassadors should make to Turkish Government.⁽³⁾

Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs said he could not speak authoritatively, but he considered proposed statement not sufficiently strong. It would not convey to Turkish Government impression that German general's appointment, nature of which is already known through iradé, is inadmissible in eyes of three Powers. Turkish Government would, on the contrary, derive impression that three Powers could be satisfied by some evasive reply.

Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs pointed out that communication which Minister for Foreign Affairs proposed to make to Turkish Government was taken in its entirety from paraphrase of your telegram No. 557 of Dec[ember] 2⁽⁴⁾ to Constantinople which I had handed to him. I explained, however, that concluding passage of Minister for Foreign Affairs' proposed communication had an appearance of menace not conveyed by your telegram to Constantinople.⁽⁵⁾

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Constantinople (as No. 573).]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 363, No. 408, and *note* (1).]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 363, No. 408. M. Sazonov telegraphed to Count Benckendorff on the same day that this draft "differs considerably from the first English proposal." In a further telegram he authorized Count Benckendorff to agree to a verbal instead of a written communication, but stipulated for an identical text. *v. Siebert*, pp. 684-5.]

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 347, No. 387.]

⁽⁵⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 362, *Ed. note*. The final paragraph of M. Sazonov's text was as follows: "En effet si l'Allemagne acquerrait à Constantinople une situation aussi prépondérante, les autres Puissances se verraient dans la nécessité de saufergarder leurs propres intérêts dans la Turquie." (F.O. 55735/49383/13/44.)]

No. 416.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.

Constantinople, December 11, 1913.

F.O. 55920/49385/13/44.

D. 4.25 P.M.

Tel. (No. 618.)

R. 5.55 P.M.

My telegram No. 609 of Dec[ember] 10.⁽¹⁾

The principal difference between the British and German commands is that some of the German officers served with the Turkish troops in the war by arrangement with the German Government. Profiting by the experience of the late war, the Turkish Government asked Admiral Limpus to find a retired British officer who

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 367-8, No. 414.]

would become Ottoman and who would command the fleet in time of war, but who would remain under Admiral Limpus in peace time. The admiral wrote about this to the Admiralty some weeks ago. The admiral understood that the Ottoman Government had themselves applied to His Majesty's Government. The Turks clearly realise that they cannot carry on their administration without effective aid from Europeans. They see their weakness, and, taking the Powers at their word, they wish to regenerate themselves and maintain their integrity.

This raises at once a very big question, which it is better should not be raised, as we are the only Power which really desires the reform and integrity of the Empire. The German command question has brought this into prominence, and if we protest we must be prepared to discuss the admiral's position.

I have asked Limpus confidentially and unofficially to consider whether he could make any suggestions for meeting the difficulty; whether the British admiral, on the renewal of his appointment in April, could forgo the title of commandant of the fleet while retaining the real power.

I will telegraph as soon as I have his views.⁽²⁾

(²) [*cp infra*, pp. 372-3, No 419; pp 380-1, No. 428.]

[*ED. NOTE*—A correspondence opened on December 11, 1913, between the Admiralty and the Foreign Office as to the terms on which a number of ranks and ratings could be lent from the British service to the Ottoman Navy (F.O 56002/48901/13/44), arising from a letter from Rear-Admiral Limpus dated November 15. Three days previously the Turkish Ambassador had submitted to Sir Edward Grey a list of the thirty-four officers and men of the Royal Navy considered by Admiral Limpus to be needed to carry out the re-organization of the Ottoman Navy (F.O. 55348/48901/13/44). Finally Sir L. Mallet was instructed in Sir Edward Grey's despatch (No 103) of February 28, 1914, to present the reply that the British Government were ready to authorize the engagement of the officers and men required, but that they should be volunteers from the retired list and that it was not possible to invite them to become Ottoman subjects while serving (F.O. 1836/1836/13/44). Sir L. Mallet reported in his telegram (No. 174) of March 19, 1914, D. 1.50 P.M., R 3.55 P.M., that he had made the communication, and that, although officers on the active list would have been preferred, the offer of retired officers was accepted. (F.O 12267/1836/14/44)]

No. 417.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. O'Beirne.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 55771/49385/13/44.

Tel. (No. 789.)

Foreign Office, December 11, 1913, 6.45 P.M.

Your tel[egram] No. 408.⁽²⁾

Russian Ambassador has spoken to me in this sense and suggested a stronger wording of communication.⁽³⁾ I promised to consider it, but said that what I heard of

(¹) [This telegram was repeated to Constantinople (No 574). On December 12, Sir Edward Grey telegraphed (No. 798) to Mr. O'Beirne, D. 6.40 P.M.:—

“My tel[egram] No. 789.

I have told Russian Ambassador that after reflection this is my definite opinion and that we can say nothing more till we know terms of contract.” (F.O 55771/49385/13/44)

This telegram and Sir Edward Grey's (No 789) to Mr. O'Beirne, were repeated to Paris (No. 451) on December 12, D. 6.40 P.M., with the addition: “I have informed French Ambassador, who is of same opinion.” *cp D.D.F., 3^{me} Sér., Vol VIII, p. 766, No 610* It was also repeated to Constantinople (No. 577) on December 12, D. 6.40 P.M. (F.O. 55771/49385/13/44.) *cp. also infra*, p. 373, No. 421.]

(²) [*v. supra*, p 369, No. 415]

(³) [For Count Benckendorff's account, *v. Siebert* pp 635-6]

this German appointment from Constantinople made me doubt, whether its importance had not been exaggerated. I am also hampered by discovering that Admiral Limpus has actual command of Turkish fleet in peace time as his two predecessors before him an arrangement that has existed now for several years though I was not aware of it. The Admirals have however always been under orders of Turkish Minister of Marine.⁽¹⁾

I think it is premature to make a joint démarche till we know the facts, and that the first step should be a separate enquiry, which should not go beyond the instruction in my tel[egram] No. 557⁽²⁾ to Sir L. Mallet.

I should propose to instruct Sir L. Mallet also to say on behalf of H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] that we especially wish to know how the position of new German General will differ from that of General von der Goltz.

(1) [*cp. supra*, p. 368, No. 414, *min.*, and *note* (9).]

(2) [*v. supra*, p. 347, No. 387, and *infra*, p. 373, No. 421.]

No. 418.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir A. Nicolson.⁽¹⁾

Private.⁽²⁾

Dear Sir Arthur,

St. Petersburg, December 11, 1913.

Many thanks for your letter of the 2nd instant.⁽³⁾ I do not know how far H[is] M[ajesty's] Government regard the question of the German Mission in Turkey as one in which they would be prepared to go to any considerable lengths; but I hope I have made it clear to you by my telegrams that it is regarded here as a question of the first importance. Sazonow has spoken to me about it with greater seriousness and openness than on any other occasion that I can remember. He says that he does not attach great importance to its purely military aspect. General von Sanders may very likely not be more successful with the Turkish Army than was von der Goltz. But he is firmly convinced that the command of the First Army Corps will give Germany such a complete political preponderance at Constantinople that other Powers will find themselves definitely reduced to a secondary position in Turkey (to which Delcassé adds that this will be only a first step, and that Germany will inevitably proceed to obtain a naval base in Turkish territory, and so forth).

Sazonow has said to me with great frankness that this question will be a test of the value of the Triple Entente. He thinks that Germany will give way if the Three Powers take a really decided stand. He believes that Germany may have weighed the chances of a conflict with France and Russia and may be prepared to run the risk, but that she would not face the additional danger of a naval war, and therefore he relies in this matter greatly on us.

As you say the great difficulty is to know whether Sazonow will adhere to what he says, and I have of course tried to form an opinion as to whether he means business in this case. In the first place I think that, remembering what Constantinople means to Russia, it would be a mistake to infer that, because Russia would not run the risk of a war on questions like Scutari, Durazzo etc., she will do the same now. Undoubtedly this is a very different question for Russia. Nératow who is always most guarded in what he says used the expression to me yesterday that General von Sanders' appointment was "inadmissible," and that is certainly the view of the Russian Government. Further I am quite clear in my mind that Sazonow is ready and indeed most anxious, if Turkey does not listen to our representations, to resort

(1) [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Prime Minister. The endorsement is initialled by Sir Edward Grey.]

(2) [Carnock MSS., Vol. X of 1913.]

(3) [*v. supra*, pp. 352-3, No. 393.]

to means of pressure such as a financial boycott, a refusal to agree to the customs increase, and a withdrawal of the Ambassadors. He insisted a good deal on the latter though I reminded him of our previous objections. He also fully realises that if the Three Powers go so far as for instance to recall the Ambassadors they could not logically and without complete loss of prestige stop there, but they must be prepared to follow up that step by more active measures. As such he has suggested the occupation of certain Turkish ports.

Does all this mean that Russia is really prepared to face the prospect of a breach with Germany? That is of course a difficult question to answer. When Sazonow spoke of the occupation of ports I said that if the Three Powers occupied Turkish ports as a means of enforcing their demand for the withdrawal of General von Sanders' command a very critical situation would necessarily arise vis-à-vis of Germany. To this Sazonow would not altogether agree. He argued that Germany need not regard the steps taken by the Three Powers as unfriendly to herself. I cannot therefore state that in the conversations which I have had with him he has definitely faced the prospect of serious difficulties with Germany. He naturally would avoid expressing himself on that point in conversation with me. But what I do see clearly is that he is bent on taking strong measures with Turkey whether in the form of demands for compensation, or merely of means of pressure, which of themselves are likely to lead to a delicate situation with Germany; and if H[is] M[ajesty's] Government cannot see their way to follow him in this I am afraid that he will be inclined to say that our support has not been worth much in a matter of first-rate importance to Russia.

I may mention that the view taken at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the reasons which led the Turkish Government to enter into this arrangement with Germany is that the Young Turk leaders feel their position to be insecure and wish to place themselves under the protection of Germany's strong arm. If therefore the Three Powers take action which brings it home to Turkey that the course adopted by the Young Turk Government leads to all sorts of embarrassments and humiliations for Turkey, it is possible that there will be a revulsion of feeling against the Young Turk régime.

I really have nothing else to write to you about but this question of the German Mission which is absorbing the interest of the Russian Government to the exclusion of everything else. Sazonow when I last spoke to him appeared fairly satisfied with the progress of the Armenian Reform negotiations.⁽⁴⁾ I hope that it will be possible to agree to the proposed communications to and from the Russian Government regarding the Shatt-el-Arab Navigation Commission as I think it is as satisfactory an arrangement as the Russian Government are likely to accept.

Yours very sincerely,
HUGH O'BEIRNE.

(4) [For a summary of the position at this time, *v. infra*, pp. 536-8, No. 586, *min.*]

No. 419.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Constantinople, December 12, 1913.

F.O. 56049/49385/13/44.

D. 10.55 A.M.

Tel. (No. 617.)

R. 11.45 A.M.

My telegram No. 613 of Dec[ember] 11.⁽²⁾

Russian Ambassador suggested last night that the best solution would be for German General to remain here as head of mission and for his adjoint to become head of Army Corps at Adrianople.⁽³⁾

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to St. Petersburg (as No. 796).]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 369-70, No. 416.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 369, *Ed. note*, and *infra*, immediately succeeding document. M. Sazonov approved the suggestion on December 11. *v. Siebert*, p. 687.]

He thought that this would be acceptable but spoke only for himself. I gather that he wished me to repeat it to you though he did not actually say so.

He had suggested the same thing to my Austrian colleague. He said that the German Government were very pressing about our having command of the fleet at Constantinople. We might say that headquarters were to be transferred to Ismid shortly.⁽⁴⁾ If it is the case, as Limpus tells me, that the Turkish Government want to get retired British naval officers perhaps to command in war it might be advantageous for us and for the Turks to change Limpus' title to that of "Adviser" when his term ends in April, and thus appear to make a concession. But Limpus has not yet sent me his considered opinion.

(4) [*cp. infra*, pp. 380-1, No. 428. This point is mentioned also in *Siebert*, p. 687.]

No. 420.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir L. Mallet.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 56049/49385/13/44.

Tel. (No. 577.)

Foreign Office, December 12, 1913, 6.5 p.m.

Your tel[egram] No. 617.⁽²⁾

Russian Ambassador has made same suggestion to me about transfer to Ismid of Admiral's personal headquarters and residence.

I have said that if it is practicable and consistent with performance of his duties by Admiral Limpus and if Turkish Gov[er]nment will agree, I not only will not object, but will encourage the transfer, if it will help to a solution of difficulty about German command.

Would there be objections on part of Admiral Limpus and if so on what grounds?⁽³⁾

(1) [This telegram was repeated to St. Petersburg (No. 797).]

(2) [v. immediately preceding document.]

(3) [*cp. infra*, pp. 380-1, No. 428.]

No. 421.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir L. Mallet.

F.O. 55771/49885/13/44.

Tel. (No. 579.)

Foreign Office, December 12, 1913, 6.40 p.m.

(My telegram No. 798 of to-day to St. Petersburg.)⁽¹⁾

You may act upon last two paragraphs. Enquiry should of course be verbal.⁽²⁾

(1) [v. *supra*, p. 370, No. 417, note (1).]

(2) [*cp. infra*, p. 379, No. 426; pp. 385-6, No. 433, and *encl.*]

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 56245/49385/13/44. *St. Petersburg, D. December 12, 1913, 8 P.M.*

Tel. (No. 410.)

R. December 13, 1913, 11.30 A.M.

I read to the Minister for Foreign Affairs your telegram No. 789 of Dec[ember] 11.⁽¹⁾

He spoke to me very strongly and indeed displayed considerable emotion.⁽²⁾ He said that he was at a loss to understand what had led to the change in the attitude of His Majesty's Government indicated by difference in tone between your telegram No. 557⁽³⁾ to Constantinople and your proposed communication to the Turkish Government of which I gave the text to the Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs on December 10th.⁽⁴⁾ The Russian Government could not concur in the latter communication, which he thought would produce effect contrary to that desired. He would not at all agree that the political importance of the German Appointment had been exaggerated. The position of the English Admiral was not analogous because there was no Turkish Fleet. Russia had been able to maintain a policy of "abstention" during the Balkan complications only because the political equilibrium at Constantinople had not been touched. It would be destroyed by the proposed appointment.

I pointed out that you were quite willing to base the proposed representations on your telegram No. 557 to Constantinople,⁽³⁾ but you had always considered that it should take the form of enquiry. The Minister for Foreign Affairs replied that he already knew all the essentials of the appointment from the *Irada*. He laid the greatest stress on the representations being identic and on the revised communication which he has submitted to you through the Russian Ambassador being made without continuance of delay which is doing harm. I told the Minister for Foreign Affairs that I was informed that two Turkish Officers of high rank had been specially appointed to whom the German General would be subordinate. He replied that this could not be, because he had it from the German Government that German Officers would not take orders from any Turkish Officers.

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, pp 370-1, No 417.]

⁽²⁾ [This seems to be the conversation with M Sazonov the account of which Sir A. Nicolson read to Count Benckendorff on December 14, and on which Count Benckendorff commented "I believe, that this telegram has made a very painful impression upon Grey." *v Siebert*, pp. 688-9.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 347, No 387.]

⁽⁴⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 369, No. 415, and note ⁽³⁾.]

Sir E. Goschen to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 56359/49385/13/44.

(No. 454.)

Sir,

Berlin, D. December 12, 1913.

R. December 15, 1913.

I have the honour to report that the Conservative "*Kreuz-Zeitung*" published a leading article yesterday in regard to the action reported to be contemplated by Russia, France and England in the question of the German military mission to Turkey, in which the attitude of Great Britain is severely criticised.

The article begins by referring to the newspaper reports that the three Powers had decided to make "enquiries" at Constantinople as to whether the Ottoman

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

Government had really appointed a German General to a high command in the Turkish Army. This, it says, was in reality the diplomatic way of saying they were going to bring pressure to bear on the Porte in the matter; Germany had, however, no reason to take this step very seriously. It could not result in the withdrawal from General Liman von Sanders of the command of the First Turkish Army Corps for the simple reason that his appointment to this command was one of the conditions attached to his appointment, since it was felt that the mission would only be successful if the officers composing it were also given military command within the sphere of their activities. This condition, which had no political objective, could not now be modified and the action decided upon by the three Powers would consequently have no effect as far as this point was concerned. Nevertheless their action was of great significance, since it showed once again that England, France and Russia could unite against Germany, whenever there was the slightest possibility that Germany might succeed in some way or another in increasing not only her prestige but also her influence in some quarter of the world. It showed further that these Powers did not shrink in such a case from taking steps which were equivalent to intervention in the internal affairs of a Sovereign State.

The attitude of Russia and France in the matter was intelligible enough, but it was a matter for surprise that England should have joined in the contemplated action at Constantinople. In the first place the British Admiral entrusted with the reorganisation of the Turkish Navy possessed precisely similar rights to those conferred on the German General. Since however it was much easier from a technical point of view to create a fleet than it was to form a great body of troops on the German model out of Turkish material, the appointment of the British Admiral could with greater justice give rise to political apprehensions than the appointment of a German General, who was subordinate to the Council of Ministers and the Minister of War. In the second place the British Government ought to have realised that their technically unjustifiable co-operation with France and Russia in this matter would make a most unfavourable impression in Germany. Only two days ago the German Chancellor had spoken of an improvement in Anglo-German relations, and of an honourable settlement in regard to Anglo-German interests, and he had expressed the hope that this settlement would be calculated to dispel all scepticism as to the honesty of England's intentions, even in those circles in Germany which had lost all faith in them as a result of past experience. Was the step about to be taken by the British Ambassador at Constantinople really calculated to dispel all scepticism as to the future of Anglo-German relations? It was possible that England had in reality joined with reluctance in the Franco-Russian *démarche*, but if so it would have been desirable for her to let this fact be known.

I have, &c.

W. E. GOSCHEN.

MINUTE.

The analogy between Admiral Limpus and General von Sanders is quite inexact in practice, though it may look like a point in theory—and a sufficiently good point to be embarrassing to us.

We are being criticised by Russia, Germany and Turkey alike over this unfortunate business

R. G. V.
Dec[ember] 15.
G. R. C.
15.xii.13.
E. A. C.
Dec[ember] 15.
A. N.
E. G.

Sir E. Goschen to Sir A. Nicolson.⁽¹⁾

Private.⁽²⁾

My dear Nicolson,

Berlin, December 12, 1913.

. . . .⁽³⁾ Sverbéef has been rather close about the German Military Mission—and has not kept either Cambon or myself informed of his negotiations on this subject with the German Foreign Office. So I went to see him yesterday and asked him whether he had received a satisfactory answer from them as regards the Iradé issued in Constantinople. He told me "No."; Jagow had told him that the German Government had certainly not advised the Porte to issue the Iradé at that particular moment—but that of course they had been aware that it was going to be issued. Sverbéef then told him that as the Iradé had been issued it was thought at St. Petersburg that the matter should be treated at Constantinople directly with the Sublime Porte. He added that Jagow had not demurred to this and that the conversation continued to be as amicable and friendly as it had been ever since the subject had been first mooted. Sverbéef seemed to think that Jagow, and especially the Chancellor, found themselves in a very difficult position owing to the fact that the Military Cabinet of the Emperor, who are supposed to have played the chief part in the negotiations had not given sufficient consideration to the political side of the question: and he is rather inclined to the opinion that they would like to find a way out of the situation. But I rather doubt this as the infernal Press is beginning to cry out and complain of the action of the Triple Entente Powers and are getting so violent on the subject that the Government, even if they wished to modify the German General's powers, might find it difficult to do so in the face of an excited public opinion.

That the Government are not easy in their minds is I think shown by a certain amount of vacillation in their conversations with Sverbéef—for first Jagow said that the thing was settled and no change could be made and then the Chancellor asked that nothing should be done in a hurry as it was quite possible that the position of the Head of the Mission might be reconsidered. Since Zimmermann told me some time ago that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs knew nothing about the matter and that it had been sprung upon them by the Military Cabinet of the Emperor, neither Jagow nor Zimmermann have said a word about it to me—and I, of course, have avoided all allusion to it. Today the Turkish Chargé d'Affaires came to see me. He at once began to talk about the Mission and said that he could not understand that the Russians, and also the French and we, as he saw in the papers, were going to protest against it as the German General would be in exactly the same position as the British Admiral and no one had found fault with that appointment. I said that I had also read what was said in the papers—but that I was unaware whether we were going to protest against it. "But," I said, "you just said that the German General would be in exactly the same position as the British Admiral. Is that so?—because I thought that the British Admiral occupied the same position with regard to the Navy as General von der Goltz to the Army." He said that that was correct—so I said that if General von Sanders had the command of an Army Corps and General von der Goltz had not—then General von Sanders occupied a far more authoritative and important position than von der Goltz had done—and as he had admitted that Admiral Limpus held the same position as von der Goltz—then the British Admiral's position was also quite different from that of the German General. He admitted that this was so theoretically but said that practically the position was the same as nothing was done in the Navy without consulting Admiral Limpus. I then asked him whether in the

(1) [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Prime Minister. The endorsement is initialled by Sir Edward Grey.]

(2) [Carnock MSS., Vol. X of 1913.]

(3) [The opening paragraphs of this letter refer to internal affairs in Germany and are irrelevant to the present chapter.]

event, which I hoped would not be the case, Turkey ever became involved in another war with one of her neighbours the German General would lead his Army Corps against the enemy—he said that he supposed he would. So I asked him whether in the last war the British Admiral had led a squadron against the Greeks—or whether in a future war he would put himself at the head of the Turkish fleet and lead it into action. To both of these questions he replied in the negative. So I said that according to his own showing the position of the two officers was not the same. He remained silent for a few moments and then said that in any case the German General would exercise no political influence whatever—he himself had been employed in the Ottoman Ministry for Foreign Affairs during all the time that the matter had been discussed with the German Government and it had always been made a *sine quâ non* that the German officers should take no part in politics whatever. The reason why the General had been given the command of an army corps was that by his authority the Turkish subaltern officers could be restrained from mixing up their military duties with politics, as had unfortunately been their habit up till now—a habit which was one of the chief causes of their recent misfortunes. The idea was that proper discipline should be introduced into the first Army Corps and that it should serve as an example to the others. I said that I quite understood their point of view in that respect—but that of course there were other things to be taken into consideration into which I need not go. I had only asked him to define the relative positions of the German General and the British Admiral as the German papers which I had read seemed to me to be under a misunderstanding. He seemed anxious to know what line His Majesty's Government was going to take on the subject—But I told him that I had no information on that point. Nor have I, for where Sazonow leads no human being can know what is going to happen from day to day. Personally I should have thought that it *did* matter to us whether a German General has the command of the Constantinople Army Corps or not; because however strictly he and his officers may carry out their orders to abstain from politics—the mere fact of their being there and absolute masters of the military situation must mean an increase of German political influence. The Army is such a much more important factor than the Navy—for the Army is both large and of excellent quality and only requires discipline and good officers to make it into a powerful military engine: whereas the Navy is at the present moment in an embryo state—and will require years before it becomes of any importance.

I don't know quite what Admiral Limpus' powers are—but I take it that the Turkish Chargé d'Affaires is right when he says that he has no actual command but is an adviser and as such is consulted on every point connected with the Turkish Navy.

Though I see all the disadvantages of there being a German General in military command at Constantinople—I shall be sorry if we have to make a big fuss about it and thereby run the risk of reducing the biggish advantages we have got besides undoing all that has been done to improve Anglo-German relations. I must add, by the by that all the *violent* remarks which have been made here on this subject have as yet been confined to the 'Kreuzzeitung.' Nearly all the papers at all connected with the Government have scarcely mentioned England except to express the conviction that as she has the Turkish Navy practically in her pocket—she cannot very well find fault with Germany for *reorganising* the Army—especially as she is as interested as Germany in putting Turkey into a position to defend the integrity of her Empire.

You mentioned in your letter an alleged remark of the German Emperor to the King of the Belgians to the effect that war with France was inevitable and would take place before very long. I quite agree with you that it is very improbable that He made such a positive statement. I can quite imagine Him saying in one of his impulsive outbursts "If the French go on irritating me I shall smash them" or something to that effect—but it is not like Him to say that war was inevitable and what is more I am certain that he would strain every nerve to prevent things coming to such a point. He is pacifically inclined and I think he would surprise a great

many people by his prudence and patience—particularly those who judge Him entirely by the outbursts in which He occasionally indulges. I think it would take a great deal to drive him into war and he would require the whole nation behind him, which in these days when finance plays such a big part is scarcely likely to happen. . . .⁽¹⁾

Yours very sincerely,
W. E. GOSCHEN.

⁽⁴⁾ [The remaining paragraphs of this letter refer to the Bagdad Railway.]

No. 425.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 56323/49385/13/44. *St. Petersburg, D. December 13, 1913, 8.10 P.M.*
Tel. (No. 411.) *R. December 14, 1913, 1.30 A.M.*

Your telegram No. 798 of Dec[ember] 12.⁽¹⁾

I called on the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and while I was there he received a telegram from the Russian Ambassador in London stating that you would not go beyond verbal enquiry of the Turkish Government, of which the terms are set forth in your telegram No. 570 of Dec[ember] 9⁽²⁾ to Constantinople.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs was deeply disappointed and upset. He stated at first that the form of enquiry you proposed was entirely unacceptable to the Russian Government, but eventually said that he would accept it, since he could obtain nothing better from His Majesty's Government, although he thought that it would be of little practical use. He is telegraphing accordingly to Constantinople.⁽³⁾

I pointed out that this was after all only a preliminary step, but the Minister for Foreign Affairs refused to look at the matter in that light, saying that it promised badly for further steps, and that it meant the failure of the three Powers in this question.

MINUTES.

The real solution w[oul]d be for Russia and Germany to settle direct. We have understood this was likely enough, but the Russian M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs]'s annoyance points rather in the opposite direction.

R. G. V.
Dec[ember] 15.
G. R. C
15.xii.13.

Sir E. Grey has decided to speak to the German Ambassador to-day⁽⁴⁾

E A C
Dec[ember] 15
A. N
E. G.

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 370, No 417, note ⁽¹⁾.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 363, No. 408.]

⁽³⁾ [M. Sazonov had telegraphed in a similar sense to London on December 12. *v. Siebert*, p 688.]

⁽⁴⁾ [*cp. infra*, pp. 383-4, No. 431.]

No. 426.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 56308/49385/13/44.

Constantinople, D. December 13, 1913, 8.30 P.M.

Tel. (No. 621.)

R. December 14, 1913, 2.30 A.M.

Your telegram No. 579 of Dec[ember] 12⁽¹⁾: German commander.

I and my Russian and French colleagues made separate verbal enquiry to-day in the terms of your telegram No. 570 of 9th December.⁽²⁾ The Grand Vizier said that he could not answer officially, but that he would do so officiously on Monday.

The assumption underlying our enquiry, that he as Grand Vizier, whose sacred duty it was to protect the Sultan's rights and uphold the independence of his country, should have done something to impair them was most embarrassing, and he had not expected His Majesty's Government to place him in such a position. The commander of an army corps acted under the orders of the Government, and was in no sense independent. The idea of his controlling the Government was so exaggerated as to appear incomprehensible. Did Admiral Limpus, who had a similar, if not a more extensive, command, control the Government? Had his predecessors, both English admirals, done so? The Grand Vizier was agitated and upset by the enquiry, which I do not think that he expected. I merely replied that I would report his remarks, but that the regular army was a very different thing from the army (? navy). I had only been instructed to ask his Highness for information and would await his answer on Monday.⁽³⁾

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 373, No. 421.]⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 363, No. 408.]⁽³⁾ [This telegram was read by Sir A. Nicolson to Count Benckendorff, apparently on December 14 *v. Siebert*, p. 689. The similar reply made by the Grand Vizier to the Russian Ambassador is given *ibid.*, p. 688 *v. also* pp. 689-90. *cp. infra*, p. 382, No. 430.]

No. 427.

Sir E. Goschen to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 56360/49385/13/44.

(No. 455.)

Berlin, D. December 13, 1913.

Sir,

R. December 15, 1913.

I have the honour to forward, herewith, a report, as marked in the margin, which I have received from L[ieutenant] Colonel Russell, Military Attaché to this Embassy, relating to the German Military Mission to Turkey.

I have, &c.

W. E. GOSCHEN.

Enclosure in No. 427.

*Lieutenant-Colonel Russell to Sir E. Goschen.**Scope of the Duties of the German Military Mission to Turkey.*

(No. 43.)

Sir,

Berlin, December 10, 1913.

I have the honour to report that further details regarding the proposed scope of the future duties of the German military mission to Turkey have recently appeared in the public press and are stated to have proceeded from authoritative sources.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet. A copy was sent to the War Office.]

As already reported in a previous despatch,⁽²⁾ the mission under Lieutenant-General Liman von Sanders is to consist of about 40 officers, including some who are at present employed as military instructors to the Turkish army. The officers of the mission, who have pledged themselves to serve in the Turkish army for a period of not less than 3 years, are drawn from the active list and from all branches of the service. Some officials of the Intendance are also included in the mission, with a view to assisting the Turkish authorities in the reorganization of their military administrative service.

It seems that the entire mission is not to proceed to Turkey at once; a portion will doubtless leave almost immediately for the scene of its new activities and another contingent will follow in the spring of 1914.

A number of officers of the mission will be employed as instructors in the various military educational establishments, instructional regiments and schools of musketry and gunnery, and in some cases also as commanders of these institutions.

The mission will moreover be represented on the Chief War Council. Thus far the functions of the officers of the new mission do not differ materially from those of their predecessors under Field Marshal von der Goltz. The new mission is, however, also actually to take over command of I, Army Corps in Constantinople. This army corps, which consists of 3 divisions, is to form a so-called "model army corps," in which the numerous Turkish officers in Constantinople, studying at educational establishments and particularly also those employed on the General Staff, may obtain practical instruction in the performance of duties with troops. It appears to be probable that Lieutenant-General Liman von Sanders will later on also be entrusted with authority to inspect other army corps besides the one under his command.

Much emphasis is laid in the German press on the statement that the duties of the mission are of a purely military nature and that the officers concerned will abstain from any participation in politics during the period of their service in Turkey. This fact does not, however, prevent the mission having a political significance, according to the German newspapers, in the sense that it manifests the confidence which the Turkish authorities still retain in the German military school, notwithstanding the disasters which have befallen the Ottoman armies and the consequent campaign of the foreign press against German military methods and institutions.

I have, &c.

ALICK RUSSELL,

*Lieutenant-Colonel,
Military Attaché.*

(²) [*v. supra*, pp. 338-9, No. 377, and *encl.*]

No. 428.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.

Constantinople, December 14, 1913.

F.O. 56810/49385/13/44.

D. 1 P.M.

Tel. (No. 623.) Confidential.

R. 4.15 P.M.

Your telegram No. 577⁽¹⁾

It will not be possible for the commander of the fleet to transfer his headquarters to Ismid until the dockyards and arsenal are completed there, and this will be a matter of some years, as the works are not even begun, although it is intended to build a floating dock there within the next two years in order to dock the "Rechadieh," which could not enter the Golden Horn.

(¹) [*v. supra*, p. 373, No. 420.]

The idea does not seem very practical. I have in the meantime got the admiral's confidential views as to possible modifications of his title.

He would be most strongly opposed to any real derogation from his powers, as he considers that it would be a breach of trust towards the Turkish Government to remain here in a position which did not enable him to reform and reorganise the fleet. He would naturally prefer that no change should be made. I have told him that I entirely share his view, but that by consenting to some nominal modification we may avoid greater evils and the opening up of some big questions.

On this understanding he thinks that when a new contract is made next April on his retirement the British admiral might be called naval adviser and a statement inserted that his duties would comprise any service assigned to him by the Turkish Government.

In that case a Turk would be in actual nominal command, and if he went against the orders of the admiral they could be transmitted through the admiral direct to the commodore.

The admiral does not think that efficiency would suffer, but all would depend upon the personal qualities and ability of the British adviser. If the Turks have, as the admiral states, applied for a retired naval officer to take Turkish nationality and command in war, Limpus thinks that he might be called assistant to the Commander of the Fleet.

Limpus says that the Turkish Government is determined to have a good fleet, and if we fail them they will apply elsewhere.

Supposing it becomes advisable to make some change in the admiral's title, it will be a somewhat delicate matter to persuade the Turks that we are not sacrificing their interests, and much will depend upon when and how the suggestion is made.

MINUTE.

We must wait till we get an indication that the German officer's title and position will be modified if that of Admiral Limpus is modified. We can then urge the latter. The Grand Vizier's reply may give us this opening.⁽²⁾

E. G.

(²) [For the Grand Vizier's reply, *v. infra*, p. 382, No. 430.]

No. 429.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.

St. Petersburg, December 14, 1913.

F.O. 56325/49385/13/44.

Tel. (No. 413.)

D. 7-55 P.M.

R. 11-30 P.M.

German Mission.

My telegram No. 411 of Dec[ember] 13,⁽¹⁾ last paragraph.

You will see that the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs infers from the attitude of His Majesty's Government in regard to preliminary *démarche* that they are not disposed to follow it up in a determined manner. I am afraid that, unless we satisfy the Russian Government of the contrary, it is certain that they will revise their estimate of the value to them of their present understanding with us.

To put the matter at its lowest, the German command of the Constantinople garrison will place in the hands of the German Ambassador an instrument of great potential importance. Having regard to Russia's vital interest in Constantinople, it is natural that she should desire to offer firm opposition to the scheme. At any rate

(¹) [*v. supra*, p. 378, No. 425.]

Minister for Foreign Affairs is convinced that the question is one of first-rate importance to Russia, and he is also convinced that if the three Powers show sufficient determination they will be able to achieve their object by pacific means of pressure, and without any risk of precipitating a conflict. If His Majesty's Government feel unable to follow Russia in a course of that kind, we must, I believe, be prepared for a definite change in the general attitude of the Russian Government towards us. For the Russian Government regard the present as the first question seriously involving Russian interests in which they have sought our support, and therefore as furnishing a test of the support which they can expect.

Further, a consideration which weighs heavily with Minister for Foreign Affairs is the following: The only probable contingency which he thinks certain to lead to war is an Armenian rising, which would necessarily induce the armed intervention of Russia. He believes that if the three Powers suffer defeat on the question of the German Mission the Turkish Government will definitely conclude that the strength lies on the side of the Triple Alliance. They will then show themselves intractable on the subject of reforms, and an Armenian rising will surely follow.

No. 430.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Constantinople, December 15, 1913.

F.O. 56616/49385/13/44.

D. 8.40 P.M.

Tel. (No. 628.)

R. 9.15 P.M.

My telegram No. 621 of Dec[ember] 13.⁽²⁾

Grand Vizier gave me his reply this afternoon. He said that German general would command 1st Army Corps and would create model regiments through which officers of other regiments would pass. He would have no authority over Straits of Bosphorus nor Dardanelles, nor would he have command of Constantinople during state of siege.

His Highness was not clear on the last point, and I could not ascertain who would be in command here, but he is to let me have further information to-morrow.⁽³⁾

My French colleague was equally unable to obtain information on this point. My German colleague, whom I met at the Porte, said that some arrangement might have been arrived at on the basis of German general being appointed inspector here. He had himself been always of this (group omitted: ? opinion). Situation had become much more difficult since *démarche* of Triple *Entente*.

MINUTE.

We must wait—but it sh[oul]d be remembered that if all Turkish Officers are to pass thro[ugh] a model corps commanded by a German General the whole patronage of the army will be in German hands—an enormous lever in Germany's favour

A. N.

E. G.

[December 16]

⁽¹⁾ [A copy of this telegram was sent to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 379, No. 426.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. infra*, p. 387, No. 435.]

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 56873/49885/13/44.

(No. 366.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, December 15, 1913.

I spoke to the German Ambassador to-day about the German military command in Constantinople.⁽²⁾ I said that it was causing very great trouble. The fact that I wished to impress on him, without going into the merits of the case, but as an absolutely certain fact, was that the Russians were more upset and more concerned about this than I had seen them at any time about anything else during all the years that I had been in the Foreign Office. I had taken the line that it was premature to indulge in a joint representation in Constantinople, or for other Powers to make demands for compensation for themselves elsewhere in Turkish territory before we knew the facts; and I had therefore said that I could not do more at present than make an enquiry, which was to be a separate and verbal enquiry of the Turkish Government. The contract, I supposed, had not been made between the Turkish Government and the German Government, but between the Turkish Government and the German General; and it was therefore the Turkish Government who alone were in a position to say what construction they put upon the contract, what was the scope of the German General's powers, and what his position was.

The Ambassador said that M. Kokovtsoff, when he was in Berlin not long ago, had been very excited about the question. Though he had been much taken aback when told that Admiral Limpus had the executive command of the Turkish Fleet, he had, from what the German Ambassador told me, shown great concern about the German command.

I said that I could assure the Ambassador that, since M. Kokovtsoff left Berlin, we had had the strongest communications from the Russian Government, and perhaps what M. Kokovtsoff had said to the German Government while he was in Berlin would enable them to imagine what the communications to us were. I had instructed Sir Louis Mallet, our Ambassador in Constantinople, to say that we assumed the Turkish Gov[ernment] would not do anything to impair their independence or their own control of the Straits and the capital and to obtain information from the Turkish Government and to find out how the position of the German General compared with that of Admiral Limpus, and how far it went beyond that which General von der Gol[t]z had occupied. I had told the Russians already, and they had admitted it, that no one could take exception to the German Officers having anything that General von der Gol[t]z had had before. My fear was that, when we received the Turkish reply, the Russians might not be satisfied and might put forward some demand for a command of their own in Armenia, or something of that kind, which would be the beginning of the break-up of the Turkish Dominions.

The Ambassador admitted that this would be very awkward. He said that he thought that the position of the German General was being very much over-rated. The General was to be accompanied by only six junior Officers.

I said that I had thought that the number was to be something like 42.

He assured me that it was only six. He said that, when the Foreign Office in Berlin first heard that the Turks wished to have German Officers, they had been rather bored by the request, feeling that there was no political advantage in it. It was, however, pressed upon them that, if Germany refused, the Turks might go elsewhere and get French Officers. As a matter of fact, this had happened in the case of Greece: Germany had refused help, and the Greeks had gone to the French. The Ambassador

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet. It was repeated to St. Petersburg (No. 417).]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. G.P., XXXVIII*, pp. 257-8. Sir A. Nicolson reported the conversation to Count Benckendorff on December 16. *v. Siebert*, pp. 690-1. M. Paul Cambon was also informed, *v. infra*, p. 387, No. 436.]

asked me earnestly to keep in communication with him before I decided to make any thing in the nature of a protest in Constantinople against the German command, as a protest would produce a very unfavourable impression in Berlin.

I said that I would certainly keep in communication with him. So far, I had not done any thing beyond the making of an enquiry in Constantinople, and I would not do anything else till I received the Turkish answer. When the answer came, and before I decided upon any further action, if action seemed necessary I would communicate with the Ambassador or the German Government.⁽³⁾ I again impressed upon him, however, that the question would be most difficult with the Russian Government: they were very sensitive about Constantinople; this sensitiveness had been the cause of difficulties between the Russians and us in past years; they could not stand the idea of any other foreign Power building a position for itself in Constantinople; and, if we were to support any other Powers in doing so, we should find ourselves back again to our bad relations with Russia: relations to which we had happily, of late years, put an end. So far I had kept everything within the limits of verbal enquiry in Constantinople, but it had not been easy.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY.]

(3) [Sir Edward Grey sent a copy of this despatch to Prince Lichnowsky, with a private letter reiterating his promise to communicate with him or with the German Government before making any protest at Constantinople. (Grey MSS., Vol. 23.)]

No. 432.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. O'Beirne.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 55671/49385/13/44.

(No. 415.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, December 15, 1913.

The Russian Ambassador called on Dec[ember] 8th⁽²⁾ and read to Sir A. Nicolson various telegrams which had recently passed between St. Petersburg and Berlin in regard to the question of the appointment of a German General to the command of the Turkish troops at Constantinople.

From these telegrams it appeared that the latest development of the question was a conversation between the German S[ecretary] of S[tate] for Foreign Affairs and the Russian Ambassador at Berlin, in the course of which Herr von Jagow, while expressing many friendly intentions, said that the appointment could not be cancelled at present. General von Sanders had, however, received instructions to examine, on his arrival at Constantinople, the question as to whether another command might not be substituted for that at Constantinople, and to send a report on the subject to the German Gov[ernment] who would then come to a decision. Herr von Jagow remarked that Admiral Limpus commanded the Turkish navy and had, therefore, the Straits under his control, and yet no comments had been made upon the situation created by that appointment. General von Sanders, Herr von Jagow added, would leave the German army.

The Russian Ambassador at Berlin, in pursuance of instructions from M. Sazonow intimated that the Russian Gov[ernment] might take some steps at Constantinople, and Herr von Jagow raised no objection to, and made no comment upon, this intimation.

Count Benckendorff then informed Sir A. Nicolson that he had received by telegraph from the Russian M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] the text of a communi-

(1) [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe; to Lord Morley.]

(2) [*cp. supra*, p. 362, *Ed. note.*]

cation which M. Sazonow has suggested should be made to the Porte by the Amb[assador]s of the 3 Powers, and that a copy of it would be sent here that evening. Count Benckendorff said that M. Sazonow wished to impress on me that any question connected directly with Constantinople was of infinitely greater importance to Russia than any other question which had arisen recently, but that he could assure me that he would proceed with great caution. Sir A. Nicolson replied that H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] would on their part have to consider the matter carefully.

[I am, &c.

E. GREY.]

No. 483.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 57406/49385/13/44.

(No. 1010.)

Sir :—

Constantinople, D. December 15, 1913.

R. December 22, 1913.

On receipt of your telegram No. 579,⁽¹⁾ respecting the German Mission, I at once visited my French and Russian Colleagues and arranged with them to make a verbal enquiry of the Grand Vizier respecting the German Mission in the terms of the enclosed memorandum.

His Highness, who was somewhat embarrassed said that he could not reply to such a request officially, as the matter was one of internal organisation which concerned Turkey alone and had no political significance. He would, however, be prepared to give me some information unofficially in two days time. His Highness remarked that he was much surprised at Great Britain associating herself in the démarche, as Admiral Limpus had command of the whole of the Turkish Fleet, whereas the German General was to have the command of one Army Corps only. I replied that the two commands could hardly be compared in importance as the General in command of the Army Corps in the Capital might in certain circumstances exercise an influence over the Government which would be inconsistent with the independence of the country.

His Highness replied that it was not likely that he would consent to any measure which would impair the independence of the country or affect the Sovereignty of the Sultan both of which he considered it his sacred duty to defend.

He was unable to see the force of the argument that the Fleet could not influence the Government to the same extent as the Army; for it might mutiny and bombard the town. As it was useless to pursue this topic I said that I would await the information which he had promised.

To-day I called again at the Porte and saw His Highness who told me little that is not already known. He said that the General would command the 1st Army Corps but that the defence of the Bosphorous and Straits were not in his command nor would he have control of the city during the state of siege. His principal duty would be to reform and re-organise the military schools and he would create a model division through which all the officers would pass in turn. I enquired who would command in the city during the state of siege but His Highness could not tell me and on my pressing him for further information promised to furnish it to me tomorrow. His Highness said that the General would be a member of the Superior Council of War. I enquired in what way his functions would differ from those of Marshal von der Goltz and he said that the difference lay in General von Sanders having the command which was absolutely necessary for the reform of the Army which the Government had deeply at heart and meant to accomplish.

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 373, No. 421.]

His Highness finally said that he considered that the objection which Russia was raising, affected the independence of the country far more seriously than the appointment itself.⁽²⁾

On comparing notes with my French Colleague I found that His Excellency had not been able to ascertain who would be in command of the town during the State of Siege.⁽³⁾

I have, &c.

LOUIS MALLET.

Enclosure in No. 433.

Memorandum.

“ Nous avons appris qu’un général allemand a été investi à Constantinople d’un commandement effectif des plus larges et des plus importants. Ce Commandement donnerait à cet officier une situation différente de celle qu’aucun officier en Turquie n’a jamais occupé.

Nous présumons que la Porte n’aurait pris aucun engagement de nature à porter atteinte à l’indépendance du Gouvernement Ottoman et que son autorité sur les Détroits et sur la ville de Constantinople reste entière. Les autres Puissances sont grandement intéressées à ces questions et elles seraient obligées à la Sublime Porte de leur donner des informations tant sur le contrat passé avec le Général allemand que sur l’étendue donnée à ses attributions et sur la façon dont le Gouvernement Ottoman comprend la situation de cet officier.”

⁽²⁾ [*cp. infra*, pp. 390-1, No. 440.]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. infra*, p. 387, No. 435.]

No. 434.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. O’Beirne.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 56796/49385/13/44.

Tel. (No. 803.)

Foreign Office, December 16, 1913, 6 p.m.

My telegram No. 419 to Berlin.⁽²⁾

It is quite clear that directly any of us take further steps at Constantinople in the way of protest the question will cease to be a Turkish question and will become a German and European question. I am therefore of opinion that after the Turkish explanations are received the next step should be to discuss the matter at Berlin.

If it appears that the German Gov[ernmen]t are ready to agree to a modification of the contract of the Turkish Gov[ernmen]t with the German General provided that the contract of Admiral Limpus is modified if necessary to make his position correspond with that of the German General, we will support such modification.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Berlin (No. 420).]

⁽²⁾ [Sir Edward Grey’s telegram (No. 419) of December 16, 1913, D 5-15 p.m., summarized his despatch to Sir E. Goschen (No. 366), of December 15. (F.O. 56796/49385/13/44.) *v. supra*, pp. 383-4, No. 431.]

No. 435.

*Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.**Constantinople, December 16, 1913.*

F.O. 56783/49385/13/44.

D. 6.50 P.M.

Tel. (No. 630.)

R. 9.30 P.M.

My telegram No. 628 of Dec[ember] 15.⁽¹⁾

Grand Vizier told me to-day that during state of siege "commandant de place" would command in Constantinople under direct orders of Minister of War.

State of siege still exists.

MINUTES.

The German, then, will not command at Constantinople during a state of siege. Exactly what authority will he have in Constantinople town when no state of siege exists?

R. G. V.

Dec[ember] 17.

Just that of the General Officer commanding the First Army Corps, I imagine.

When there is no state of siege, the government of the city is, to the best of my belief, nominally in the hands of the Governors of Pera, Galata and Stambul—usually military officers, but the post is a civilian one. But a state of siege is now the normal condition.

G. R. C.

17.xii.13.

E. A. C.

Dec[ember] 17.

A. N.

E. G.

⁽¹⁾ [*supra*, p. 382, No. 430]

No. 436.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 57291/49385/13/44.

(No. 761.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, December 16, 1913.

I told M. Cambon to-day⁽²⁾ the substance of what I had said to the German Ambassador yesterday about the German military command in Constantinople, including my promise not to make a protest there without further communication with the German Ambassador.⁽³⁾

I said to M. Cambon that the Russians seemed to think that a protest might be made in Constantinople, and the matter dealt with there as a purely Turkish question, but within 48 hours it would have become a German and European question. My present view therefore was that, if the Russian Government were not satisfied with the reply of the Turks to our enquiry, the matter should be taken up in Berlin before we made any protest in Constantinople.

[I am, &c.]

F. G[REY].

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]⁽²⁾ [*cp. D.D.F., 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VIII, p. 789, No. 632.*]⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 383-4, No. 431, and *note* ⁽⁴⁾]

[*ED. NOTE.*—There was a conversation between Sir Edward Grey and Count Mensdorff on December 16 on the question of Liman von Sanders. It was reported by Count Mensdorff, together with some observations by Sir William Tyrrell. Both remarked on the extraordinary anxiety of Russia. *v. O.-U.A., VII, p. 663, No. 9101.* No record of this conversation can be traced in the British archives.]

No. 437.

*Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.**St. Petersburg, December 17, 1913.*

F.O. 56903/49385/13/44.

D. 8.50 P.M.

Tel. (No. 414.)

R. 10 P.M.

I informed Minister for Foreign Affairs of substance of your telegram No. 803 of Dec[ember] 16.⁽¹⁾

He said that he saw no objections to His Majesty's Government discussing German military mission question at Berlin.⁽²⁾ Possibly this might be useful, but Russian Government had already exhausted arguments with Germany, and had nothing to add to what they had said. They could not, therefore, resume discussion.

MINUTE.

But when the Turks *have* answered,⁽³⁾ I trust the Russians will let us know definitely what they propose to do.

G. R. C.

18.xii.13.

E. A. C.

Dec[ember] 18.

E. G.

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 386, No. 434.]

⁽²⁾ [Suggestions in this sense were sent by M. Sazonov to Count Benckendorff on December 17, 1913. *v. Siebert*, pp. 691-2.]

⁽³⁾ [In a report of December 17, 1913, Count Benckendorff stated that "Nicolson deems the answer, given to the British Ambassador, to be preparatory in nature." *v. Siebert*, p. 692. *cp. supra*, p. 382, No. 430; p. 387, No. 435.]

No. 438.

Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.

[By Post.]

F.O. 56939/49385/13/44.

Paris, D. December 17, 1913.

Tel. (No. 167.) Confidential.

R. December 18, 1913.

Your telegram No. 451 of 12th December.⁽¹⁾

On my return visit to the Minister for Foreign Affairs this afternoon I mentioned the need for acting with great circumspection at Constantinople in the matter of the German military mission. M. Doumergue concurred. He told me that M. Isvolsky, whom he had just seen, had complained that France and England had not acted up to the first intentions of His Majesty's Government in the matter.⁽²⁾ M. Doumergue replied that the proposed representations at Constantinople had, in the first instance, been suspended at the request of the Russian Government; that further investigation had shown the situation to be less acute than had at first been supposed, and that it had therefore been decided to begin by making enquiries at the Porte.

As the Russian Ambassador continued to complain of the small support given by France and England, the French Minister for Foreign Affairs asked what the Russian Government wished to be done. M. Isvolsky said that he was without instructions on the subject.⁽³⁾

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 370-1, No. 417, and *note* (1).]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 347, No. 387; p. 369, No. 415; p. 374, No. 422; *cp. also infra*, p. 392, No. 442.]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. M. Isvolski's telegram of December 18, 1913. v. Siebert*, p. 693. He states there that M. Doumergue "is prepared to support us energetically." *cp. Stieve*, III, pp. 425-6, and pp. 430-1.]

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.(¹)

F.O. 58090/49385/13/44.

(No. 384.)

Sir:—

St. Petersburg, D. December 18, 1913.

R. December 29, 1913.

I had two long and rather painful conversations with the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs on the 12th and 13th instant respectively regarding the German Military Mission in Turkey. On the first of these dates Mr. Sazonow still hoped that His Majesty's Government would see their way to agree to a more strongly worded communication by the Three Ambassadors to the Porte than that of which the text is given in your telegram No. 570 to Sir L. Mallet of the 9th instant.⁽²⁾ On the 13th instant he was aware that you had decided not to go beyond that text. It seems unnecessary to report in detail the terms in which he gave expression to his disappointment. Mr. Sazonow had been much gratified by the language of your telegram No. 557 to Sir L. Mallet of the 2nd instant⁽³⁾ and would have wished the Three Ambassadors to make an identic, though verbal, communication to the Turkish Government in the sense of that telegram, omitting the allusion to demands for compensation by the Three Powers as being premature at this stage. But he thought the wording proposed in your telegram of the 9th instant not sufficiently strong, and considered that it would produce on the Turkish Government the impression that the Three Powers were not in earnest. He declared at first that it was entirely unacceptable to the Russian Government. Afterwards he said that he would accept it as he could obtain nothing more from His Majesty's Government. I pointed out to His Excellency that the *démarche* which the three Ambassadors were now to make was after all only a preliminary step, so that the precise form which it took was perhaps not of such importance as he seemed to think. He refused to take that view of the matter, saying that this first step augured badly for further steps and that it meant the defeat of the Three Powers on the present question.

As Mr. Sazonow repeatedly pressed me to explain why His Majesty's Government now seemed to take a less serious view of the proposed appointment than they had done at first, I said that Sir L. Mallet did not consider that it would have any far-reaching political effects. I asked whether Mr. de Giers regarded the matter as seriously as Mr. Sazonow himself, to which he replied that the Russian Ambassador considered that the appointment would have the most serious political consequences. I also laid stress on the difficulty in which you are placed by Admiral Limpus' command of the Turkish Fleet, but His Excellency argued that whatever the Turkish Fleet might become in the future it was now practically non-existent and could not be compared as a political factor with the Constantinople garrison.

Mr. Sazonow maintained with great earnestness and conviction that he was not asking His Majesty's Government to embark on a course which could lead to a European conflict. He said that he felt absolutely assured that if the Three Powers showed to Turkey not in a hostile way but with perfect clearness that they could not acquiesce in the proposed arrangement, they could achieve their object by pacific means of pressure and without any risk of precipitating a conflict. For the Triple Entente was in reality a stronger combination than the Triple Alliance, and Germany would certainly not risk a war over the present question. When Mr. Sazonow made this observation I took the opportunity to ask him whether he himself would risk a war for it. He replied vehemently and almost indignantly "certainly not"; but a firm attitude on the part of the Three Powers and the use of pacific pressure on Turkey would be quite sufficient for his purpose.

(¹) [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe; to Lord Morley. A copy was sent to Berlin.]

(²) [*v. supra*, p. 363, No. 408.]

(³) [*v. supra*, p. 347, No. 387.]

After these two conversations with the Minister and another with Baron Schilling the Chef de la Chancellerie, who was even more outspoken than his Chief, I had the honour to report by my telegram No. 413 of the 14th instant,⁽¹⁾ that if His Majesty's Government felt unable to adopt a course such as desired by Mr. Sazonow their decision would, I believed, cause the Russian Government considerably to alter their view of the value to them of the present understanding between the two countries. There is no doubt that, as the result of the constant cooperation of the Three Powers during the last few years and the frequent diplomatic assistance rendered by His Majesty's Government to Russia during the recent Balkan complications, the Russian Government (and indeed Russians in general) have come to count on British support to an extent which was hardly contemplated at the time of the conclusion of the Agreement of 1907.⁽⁵⁾ Mr. Sazonow himself has plainly told me that in the present difficulty the Russian Government rely not only to a great extent but principally on Great Britain. It has also been made clear to me that the Russian Government regard the question of the German command of the Constantinople garrison as one of an altogether different order from the various issues affecting the interests of the Balkan States which have arisen during the past eighteen months. The Russian Government treat the present as the first question seriously involving Russian interests in which they have asked for British support. If therefore His Majesty's Government do not see their way to following Mr. Sazonow in the policy of opposition to the German command which he advocates, and if General v[on] Sanders remains at the head of the 1st Turkish Army Corps, I anticipate that the Russian Government will materially revise their previous estimate of the support which they can expect from Great Britain in Near Eastern affairs.

I have, &c.

HUGH O'BEIRNE.

⁽⁴⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 381-2, No. 429.]

⁽⁵⁾ [This subject is treated in *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IV, *passim*]

No. 440.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.

St. Petersburg, December 19, 1913.

F.O. 57335/49385/13/44.

Tel. (No. 417.)

D. 9 A.M.

R. 10.30 P.M.

Mr. O'Beirne's Previous telegrams: German Military Mission.

Minister of Foreign Affairs Whom I saw this afternoon though using (?) calm language at first spoke to me seriously on the subject. He recapitulated all that had taken place and did not conceal his annoyance at the form you had given to the recent communication at Constantinople.⁽¹⁾ He had, he said, told the Germans it was not military but the political side of the question that preoccupied him. He did not believe that their officers would make anything really efficient out of the Turkish troops but the command of these troops would make the German Ambassador virtual dictator at Constantinople. He repeated that if only the Triple Entente would act firmly together all would go well.

I assured His Excellency that you were always most anxious to give Russia every possible support in all questions in which she was interested but in this particular case our position was a very weak one. You had spoken strongly to the German Ambassador, as Turks were not likely to yield as long as they had Germany behind them.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs said that if Germany's reply was unsatisfactory we should have to tell her that we knew that the appointment of the German General

⁽¹⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 386, No. 433, *encl.*]

had been forced on her by Turkey and that she had played a passive rôle throughout but that as this arrangement was one to which we could not assent we should have to settle matters direct with Turkey.

I asked what form of pressure His Excellency would then propose to bring to bear on Turkey adding it would be dangerous to bluff if we were not prepared to back up our words with deeds.

His Excellency replied that nothing was so likely to bring about war as to appear to be afraid of it and the impression had unfortunately gained ground that Russia would not fight. This was a great danger for peace. He could take no decision until the Emperor returned in about a week. He spoke however of three possible courses: 1. Financial pressure; 2. Appointment of a Russian and a French Inspector General in Armenia; 3. Occupation by Russia of Bayazid and Erz-Erum.

MINUTES.

I have always considered that if Russia really took so serious a view of the matter as to insist at Constantinople on either redress or compensation, at the risk of having to resort to actual measures of compulsion, she would move on the Russo-Turkish frontier in Armenia, where she has the means to assert herself.

But the question which Russia will have to face is whether she is prepared for the much greater risk of the possible further complication which such a step on her part may bring about: a German threat that Turkey will be supported by Germany (and the triple alliance) in a war with Russia.

This is the question which will have to be put to the Emperor of Russia, if necessary by France and England, before the latter can be reasonably expected to commit themselves to support a Russian move in Armenia.

E. A. C.

Dec[ember] 20.

Are we yet in position [*sic*: possession] of the full Turkish reply? If so please let me have it complete and I will then consider addressing some questions upon it to M. Sazonov and endeavouring to find out what would satisfy the Russian Gov[ernmen]t. Meanwhile the more time gained the better.

E. G.

Please see despatch No. 1010⁽²⁾ just rec[ei]v[er]d. This is the fullest inform[at]io[n] we have; the only addition to it being that the commandant de place w[oul]d command in state of siege.⁽³⁾

R. G. V.

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 385-6, No. 433, and *encl.*]

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 387, No. 435.]

No. 441.

Sir E. Goschen to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Private.⁽²⁾

My dear Grey,

Berlin, December 19, 1913.

. . . .⁽³⁾ I am looking forward with horror to the German Military Mission question. The papers have been fairly quiet about our share in it as yet—but I hear thunder in the distance and I am very preoccupied how far, if we have to talk about it here, it will affect our present pleasant relations. I see from the Sections that

⁽¹⁾ [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Prime Minister.]

⁽²⁾ [Grey MSS., Vol. 23.]

⁽³⁾ [The opening paragraphs of this letter refer to Albania and the Ægean Islands. They add nothing to information given elsewhere.]

Sazonow is very angry with us—but hasn't he blown rather hot and cold on this question?

My great hope as regards any representations that may have to be made here, lies in the fact that the Foreign Office here have never been so very keen about the Military Mission, as it was rather arranged over their heads. But that hope is rather discounted by the fact that there are two Governments in Germany, one military and one civil—and that the former is the strongest of the two. The Foreign Office will be certainly afraid of coming to any decision which would have the appearance of going against the Emperor's Military Cabinet. At the same time whatever Admiral Limpus' position may be, my personal opinion is that the political influence of a man commanding (even) the Ottoman Navy can never be equal, or even nearly equal to that of a man commanding an Army Corps at Constantinople. . . .⁽⁴⁾

Your very sincerely,

W. E. GOSCHEN.

⁽⁴⁾ [The remaining paragraphs are omitted as they refer to French railway negotiations with Germany, and other minor matters irrelevant to the present chapter.]

[*ED. NOTE.*—A conversation between the German Emperor and the Austro-Hungarian Military Attaché at Berlin is recorded as having taken place on December 19, 1913. *v. O.-U.A.*, VII, pp. 672-3, No. 9114. For other references to the views of the German Emperor at this time, *v. G.P.*, XXXVIII, pp. 262, 264, 265. Three important telegrams were sent by M. de Giers from Constantinople concerning Baron von Wangenheim's attitude and proposals, of which the German Emperor approved. *v. Siebert*, pp. 694-5. *cp. G.P.*, XXXVIII, pp. 262, 264, 273-4. M. Sazonov authorized the communication of two of the three telegrams to Sir Edward Grey on December 20. *v. Siebert*, pp. 693-4. A conversation between M. de Giers and Baron von Wangenheim on December 19 was reported also by Count Pallavicini on December 20, 1913. *v. O.-U.A.*, VII, p. 670, No. 9111.]

No. 442.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.

F.O. 56939/49385/13/44.

Tel. (No. 454.)

Foreign Office, December 20, 1913, 2 P.M.

Your tel[egram] No. 167 of Dec[ember] 17.⁽¹⁾ (German Military Mission.)

First instructions of H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] were founded partly upon assumption that German General would command force that controls the Straits. We ascertained soon afterwards that this was not the case. This alone would justify M. Doumergue's reply to Russian Ambassador.

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 388, No. 438.]

No. 443.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

St. Petersburg, December 21, 1913.

F.O. 57356/49385/13/44.

Tel. (No. 419.)

D. 8.28 P.M.

R. 10 P.M.

My telegram No. 417 of Dec[ember] 19.⁽²⁾

Minister for Foreign Affairs called to-day to tell me that Germans were giving way, and that German Ambassador yesterday suggested that Russian and German

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Berlin (as No. 427); to Constantinople (as No. 588).]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 390-1, No. 440.]

military attachés should consult together with a view to finding some solution that would be satisfactory to both parties. Ambassador had reproached the Minister with having broken off the conversations with Berlin, and with having made recent *démarches* at Constantinople in concert with England and France. Minister replied that he had only done so when he saw conversation would have no result.

Minister for Foreign Affairs has already sent instructions to military attaché, and hopes that Germans will consent to command being transferred to Adrianople.

MINUTES.

The Russian Chargé d'Affaires confirmed and extended what Sir G. Buchanan reports, verbally to-day,⁽³⁾ saying he gave the information in strict confidence. Pourparlers had first been opened between the German and Russian ambassadors at Constantinople, and Herr von Wangenheim suggested that as General von Sanders had assured him that from a military point of view no special importance attached to Constantinople as the seat of the German command, the two military attachés might be left to come to some arrangement by which the Russian objections could be satisfactorily met. The seat of command might be transferred to Adrianople, it would however remain necessary to have a small contingent at Constantinople under the German general's direct orders, for purposes of instruction in connection with the training of the Military School and the Académie de l'Etat Major.

These suggestions had been taken up at Berlin and put forward at St. Petersburg, where they were received in a friendly manner. The Russian Gov[ernmen]t did not like the reservation of the "small contingent" at Constantinople remaining under the German command, nor a German suggestion that at least a month should elapse before any change is allowed to be announced. They would prefer a much shorter interval. Some trouble was also anticipated as the Turkish Gov[ernmen]t on their part had declared that they would not allow the scheme as already settled between them and Germany to be changed. There was however now good hope of a satisfactory settlement being arrived at.

Meanwhile M. Sazonov was anxious that there should be as few newspaper polemics on the subject [as possible], as they only served to create irritation and a public opinion which would make it more difficult for Germany and Turkey to give way. M de Etter suggested that a hint to this effect given on our part at Berlin might be useful.

Qu[ery].

Telegraph to Berlin in terms of attached draft.⁽⁴⁾

E. A. C.

Dec[ember] 22.

Our press also might be warned if they make enquiries or show any disposition to stir the matter.

E. G.

⁽³⁾ [*cp. infra*, p. 404, No. 454.]

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. infra*, p. 396, No. 447.]

No. 444.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Constantinople, December 23, 1913.

F.O. 57845/49385/13/44.

Tel. (No. 638.)

D. 1·20 P.M.

R. 4·10 P.M.

My German Colleague has been authorised to discuss with the Russian Ambassador solution according to which the German General would forego the command of the First Army Corps retaining a few troops for exercises.

The Command of the First Army Corps at Adrianople would be given to another German Officer.

The Russian Ambassador thinks that some arrangement of this sort would be acceptable.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to St. Petersburg (as No. 807); to Berlin (as No. 428).]

No. 445.

*Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.**St. Petersburg, December 23, 1913.*

F.O. 57853/49385/13/44.

D. 7.58 P.M.

Tel. (No. 420.)

R. 10 P.M.

My immediately preceding telegram⁽¹⁾: German Military Mission.Minister for Foreign Affairs sent for me to-day and read to me telegram from Russian Chargé d'Affaires reporting his conversation with Sir E. Crowe.⁽²⁾

His Excellency begged me to thank you for all that you had said to German Ambassador, to say how grateful he was for what you were doing at Berlin.

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 392-3, No. 443.]⁽²⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 393, No. 443, *mutatis*; *infra*, p. 404, No. 454.]

No. 446.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 58097/49385/13/44.

(No. 391.)

St. Petersburg, D. December 23, 1913.

Sir,

R. December 29, 1913.

I called on the Minister for Foreign Affairs on the 19th instant on my return from leave of absence, and found His Excellency very depressed and preoccupied with regard to the question of the German Military Mission to Constantinople. Monsieur Sazonow recapitulated all that he had already said on the subject to Mr. O'Beirne, and, though his manner was studiously calm, he did not attempt to conceal the serious view which he took of the situation nor the disappointment which he felt at the attitude adopted by His Majesty's Government. Only once in the course of our conversation did he give forcible expression to his feelings, when in speaking of the instructions which you had sent to Sir L. Mallet in your telegram No. 570 of the 9th instant,⁽²⁾ he said that he had been "furious" on hearing that you had substituted them for the instructions originally sent on the 2nd of December.⁽³⁾ The consequence had been that the communication made by the three Ambassadors had fallen flat and had failed to make the slightest impression on the Porte. The Triple Entente, His Excellency continued, constituted a stronger combination of Powers than the Triple Alliance, and the former had only to act firmly together to carry the day. It was not that he was afraid of the military consequences that might ensue from the appointment of a German General to the chief command at Constantinople, for he did not believe that the Germans would ever convert the Turkish Army into an efficient fighting force. It was rather the political side of the question that preoccupied him, as, were the command of the troops in the capital placed in the hands of a German General, the position of the German Ambassador at Constantinople would be that of a virtual dictator.

I endeavoured in my reply to explain our position to His Excellency, saying that you had considered it essential that we should first of all enquire of the Turkish Government what the actual status of the German General was to be. You were, I could assure him, most anxious to give Russia every possible support in questions in which she was interested; but in the present case we were hampered by the fact that Admiral Limpus had actual command of the Turkish Fleet. The Turks, moreover,

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe; to Lord Morley A copy was sent to Berlin]⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 363, No. 408.]⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 347, No. 387.]

were not likely to give way so long as they knew that they had Germany behind them and the first thing therefore to be done was to induce the latter to adopt a conciliatory attitude on the question. With this object in view you had spoken very seriously to the German Ambassador.

Monsieur Sazonow replied that he entertained but little hope of any real concession on Germany's part and that if she declined to make any, we should have to tell her, in as friendly a way as possible, that the appointment of a German General at Constantinople was one to which we could not consent and that, as we knew that it had been forced on her by Turkey and that she had throughout played but a passive rôle, she must allow us to settle the matter direct with the Porte.

I enquired what step His Excellency proposed that we should subsequently take and what particular form of pressure he contemplated bringing to bear on Turkey. It would be both useless and dangerous to hold language, which we were not prepared to back up with action.

Monsieur Sazonow, in reply, said that nothing was so likely to bring war suddenly on us as to be constantly proclaiming our fear of war. The impression had unfortunately gained ground that Russia would not fight and one of the Turkish Ministers had even told the German Ambassador that he need be under no apprehensions, as Russia would under no circumstances have resort to force. This was a view which, if acted on, would in the end prove fatal to the maintenance of peace. He could not put forward any definite proposal nor say what Russia would do till he had discussed the whole question with the Emperor after His Majesty's return to St. Petersburg in about a week's time.

In the course of our conversation, however, His Excellency advocated the exercise of financial pressure on Turkey and our refusal of the 4% Customs' Increase. Failing this he thought that we might demand, by way of compensation, the appointment of a Russian and of a French Inspector-General in Armenia. He also spoke of the possible occupation by Russia of Bayazid or Erzeroum, adding that he had never personally entertained the idea of asking for the appointment of a Russian General to the command of the troops at Erzeroum, as such an appointment might carry with it duties, that would conflict with those which the General owed to his own Government.

On the 21st instant Monsieur Sazonow called at this Embassy and told me that the German Ambassador, whom he had seen on the preceding day, had proposed that the Russian and German Military Attachés at Constantinople should be instructed to confer together with a view to arriving at an arrangement that would be satisfactory to both Governments. This, His Excellency said, was a clear indication that the Germans were about to give way and he trusted that they would now consent to the command entrusted to General von Sanders being transferred to Adrianople. Count Pourtalès had, Monsieur Sazonow informed me, reproached him with having broken off his conversation with the German Government and with having made, in concert with England and France, a démarche at Constantinople which had created a bad impression at Berlin. Monsieur Sazonow had replied that the appointment of General von Sanders had made a still worse impression at St. Petersburg and that it was only when he found that the conversation, on which he had entered, with Berlin could lead to no possible result that he had addressed himself to Paris and London. He had also impressed on Count Pourtalès the necessity of closing the incident with as little delay as possible and had told him that he had, on the preceding day, received visits from two prominent members of the Duma who proposed to interpellate the Government on the subject when the Chamber reassembled.

Beyond referring to the unwillingness of the German Court to persist in an attitude that might seriously affect the traditional ties of friendship that bound them to the Russian Imperial Family, His Excellency did not explain why Germany was now holding out an olive branch. On my remarking that it seemed in any case to prove that you were right in insisting on our restricting the communication made by the three Ambassadors at Constantinople to a simple enquiry, as otherwise it would have been much more difficult for Germany to have acted as she was doing,

Monsieur Sazonow maintained that a stronger protest on our part would have had a still more effectual result.

This afternoon Monsieur Sazonow sent for me and read to me a telegram which he had received from Monsieur de Etter, reporting a conversation which he had had yesterday with Sir Eyre Crowe.⁽¹⁾ His Excellency said that it confirmed what he had already told me with regard to the present dispositions of the German Government and he trusted that the matter was now on a fair road to settlement. It was, however, necessary to do something to calm Russian public opinion without delay, as he was being daily besieged by journalists, whom it was very difficult to keep in hand.

I congratulated His Excellency on the turn that things were taking and said that I thought that he had no reason to be dissatisfied with the support which he had received from His Majesty's Government on this question. The original instructions which you had sent to Sir L. Mallet proved how great was your desire to give His Excellency every assistance in your power and the modifications which you were subsequently compelled to introduce into them were necessitated by the discovery that Admiral Limpus was in command of the Turkish Fleet.⁽²⁾ It seemed, moreover, from what His Excellency had told me, that your conversation with Prince Lichnowski had been productive of good.

Monsieur Sazonow replied, with a smile, that he must admit having been very annoyed at seeing Sir Louis Mallet's original instructions toned down; but that was all past and forgotten. He would now only ask me to assure you how sincerely grateful he was to you for all that you were doing at Berlin and to thank you more especially for the language which you had held to the German Ambassador.

I have, &c.

GEORGE BUCHANAN.

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 393, No. 443, *min.*; *infra*, p. 404, No. 454.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 367, No. 414, and *note* (3).]

No. 447.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 57356/49385/13/44.

Tel. (No. 430.)

Foreign Office, December 24, 1913, 4.10 P.M.

Sir G. Buchanan's telegram No. 419 (57356 of December 21st⁽²⁾)—German General at Constantinople.)

Russian government are evidently favourably impressed by apparent readiness of German government to seek a solution by amicable arrangement with them. They wish this information to be treated as strictly confidential, being somewhat apprehensive lest any premature disclosure or discussion in the press and consequent public polemics should make it more difficult for German and Turkish governments to be conciliatory. If you have an opportunity you might hint how desirable it would be to keep the press quiet and off the subject until an arrangement has been come to.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Constantinople (No. 591).]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 392-3, No. 443.]

No. 448.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 58100/49385/13/44.

(No. 394.)

St. Petersburg, D. December 25, 1913.

Sir,

R. December 29, 1913.

Mr. O'Beirne had the honour, in his despatches Nos. 372 and 378 of the 4th and 10th instant⁽²⁾ respectively, to report to you that almost the entire Russian Press was energetically protesting against the German military mission to Turkey. These protests which were at first reserved almost exclusively for Germany and, in a lesser degree, for Turkey, have now given place to bitter reproaches levelled against the Russian Government for the supineness and inefficacy of their diplomacy in this question. All the papers have taken up the cry, the most insistent and the most violent being the 'Novoe Vremya,' the 'Sviet' and the 'Retch.'

The general trend of the articles which have appeared in the Press is to the effect that Russian diplomacy, by failing to take a strong line in this matter, has signally failed to profit from yet another of the many trump cards which fate, during the last few months, has placed in her hand. Both England and Germany had profited from the downfall of Turkey in Europe; only Russia had failed to derive from it any benefit, and had moreover sacrificed vital interests which she had waged more than one bloody war to uphold. When would she finally rid herself of the obsession that Germany was actuated by friendly motives towards her? The half-hearted action of the Triple Entente in this question, with the consequent failure of their representations at Constantinople meant an irreparable blow to their prestige in Turkey and was a portent pregnant with danger for the immediate future.

In its latest article on the subject the 'Novoe Vremya' refers to an announcement made from Constantinople that the Powers of 'commandant de place' in time of siege are to be allotted to a Turkish officer and not to General von Sanders, a statement which it regards as implying a polite but scarcely veiled fiction calculated to deceive nobody.

It concludes the article in question by ironically congratulating the Russian Government on the latest success of their diplomacy and suggesting that the names of those who had achieved it should be inscribed on golden tablets.

In an article in its yesterday's issue the 'Retch' says that the whole question is now revolving in a vicious circle and that it has become impossible to distinguish between cause and effect; is Russia's weak-kneed diplomacy the result of the bad faith of her friends, or are the latter loth to lend their support to such feeble diplomacy as that of Russia?

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe; to Lord Morley.]

⁽²⁾ [Mr. O'Beirne's despatch (No. 372), D. December 4, 1913, R. December 8, 1913, and his despatch (No. 378), D. December 10, 1913, R. December 15, 1913, merely reported the attacks of the Russian Press on the German Mission. (F.O. 55264/49385/13/44. 56343/49385/13/44.)]

Sir M. de Bunsen to Sir Edward Grey.

Vienna, December 26, 1913.

F.O. 57976/13799/13/44.

D. 8·30 P.M.

Tel. (No. 203.)

R. 10 P.M.

My telegram No. 202 of Dec[ember] 23.⁽¹⁾

In conversation to-day with the German Ambassador I expressed hopes that H[is] E[xcellency] was using his influence here to support your proposals which, I understood, had been well received in Berlin. He said that German influence would certainly be employed everywhere to remove difficulties as far as possible, but the attitude of Turkey was a serious obstacle, Greece had been made more obstinate than before by the connection declared to exist between the question of the South Albanian frontier and the islands and in short much patience would be necessary and there would be danger in seeking to settle the matter offhand.

He touched also on the subject of the excitement in Russia over the German command in C[onstantino]ple. Russia, he thought, was bluffing a little and would not dare to retaliate by occupation of any part of Asia Minor. He spoke with appreciation of your action in restraining Russia from adopting an uncompromising attitude. I said that Russian uneasiness seemed to be quite genuine and I hoped that something would come of the pourparlers said to be still going on between St. Petersburg and Berlin.

(¹) [*v. supra*, p. 82, No. 98.]

Sir E. Goschen to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Berlin, December 27, 1913.

F.O. 58015/49385/13/44.

D. 8·30 P.M.

Tel. (No. 219.)

R. 11·55 P.M.

Your telegram No. 430 of Dec[ember] 24.⁽²⁾

The Secretary of State spoke to me to-day⁽³⁾ on the subject of the German Military Mission. He said that he was doing all he could to come to some amicable arrangement, but it was not easy, firstly because the Ottoman Government seemed rather inclined to make difficulties, and secondly because the Russian press and, of course, that of France were writing too much on the subject. I told him that I had been (group omitted: ? impressed) by the great reserve shown by the German press, and I expressed the hope that praiseworthy (group omitted: ? attitude) would be maintained. He said that the Imperial Government had done and were doing all in their power to that end, and, moreover, the Chancellor had successfully induced all the heads of parties to abstain from bringing up the matter in the recent debates in the Reichstag.

In conversation afterwards he told me that they had been much surprised by the strong objections of Russia to the mission. The matter had been first mentioned by the Emperor to the Emperor of Russia, who had made no objection, and had in fact rather encouraged the idea.⁽⁴⁾ It had, unfortunately, not been mentioned to M. Sazonof when he was here;⁽⁵⁾ he had probably been unaware of it, and the Chancellor, thinking that the affair was all arranged, and that it was only a matter of another German officer succeeding General von der Goltz, had not thought it worth

(¹) [This telegram was sent to St. Petersburg (as No 812); to Constantinople (as No. 592).]

(²) [*v. supra*, p. 396, No. 447.]

(³) [*cp. infra*, pp. 402-3, No. 453.]

(⁴) [*cp. supra*, p. 340, No. 378, and *note* (⁴); *infra*, p. 402, No. 453.]

(⁵) [*cp. supra*, pp. 46-7, No. 54, and *note* (²).]

while to discuss it. It was only when M. Kokovtsov came to Berlin that Russian feelings on the subject were discovered.⁽⁶⁾ There had been no bad faith in the matter at all, and the only reason why the Turks had insisted on General Liman being given a slightly superior position than his predecessor was that the latter had, comparatively speaking, failed owing to his not being in a position to enforce the necessary discipline. The proof that General Liman's position as commander of the 1st Army Corps was nothing very extraordinary lay in the fact that the position had previously been occupied by a Turkish colonel. He himself had been inclined to think that the position was not sufficiently important for an officer of General Liman's rank.

The reason why Constantinople had been chosen was the obvious one that all the military schools were there, and that it was absolutely necessary that the general should have them under his eye. In the meantime the German Ambassador at Constantinople was coming to Berlin in a few days, and the whole matter would be gone into thoroughly.

MINUTES.

But see the communication made to me by M de Etter to-day.⁽⁷⁾

F. A. C.
Dec[ember] 29.

And my minute thereon.

E. G.

⁽⁶⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp 339-40, No 378, and *note* (2).]

⁽⁷⁾ [*v. infra*, pp. 400-2, No. 452, and *min. cp.* the Russian account in *Siebert*, p 696.]

No. 451.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

St. Petersburg, December 29, 1918.

F.O. 58509/49885/13/44.

D. 9.55 P.M.

Tel. (No. 424.)

R. 10.30 P.M.

Minister for Foreign Affairs told the German Ambassador yesterday⁽²⁾ that, according to telegram that he had received from Constantinople, the German and Russian military attachés had been unable to come to an agreement owing to former being forbidden by his instructions to do more than discuss details of German command. This was in direct contradiction to the proposal originally submitted to him by German Ambassador, which was to the effect that two military attachés should endeavour to find solution of question. He must therefore ask for an explanation of this discrepancy.

German Ambassador replied that his Government were most anxious to come to an understanding with Russia on this question. His Excellency must not, however, hustle them, as it was a question of prestige.

Minister for Foreign Affairs replied that he had no wish to do so, but that Russian public opinion had to be tranquillised, and he could not wait indefinitely. German Government could at least assure him privately of what they were prepared to do, as if present conversation was to lead to nothing he would have to consider what steps it would be necessary for him to take at Constantinople.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Constantinople (as No. 595); to Berlin (as No. 435); to Paris (as No. 456).]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. G.P.*, XXXVIII, pp. 281-2.]

[*ED. NOTE.*—A telegram from Count Pallavicini of December 29, 1913, contains a reference to the personal views of the Emperor Nicholas II expressed in a letter to the Emperor William II. *v. O.-U.A.*, VII, pp. 684-5, No. 9132.]

*Minute by Sir Eyre Crowe.⁽¹⁾**German Military Command at Constantinople.*

F.O. 58808/49385/13/44.

Foreign Office, December 29, 1913.

M. de Etter came to-day⁽²⁾ to make what he described as another grave communication on the subject of the German general's command at Constantinople. M. Sazonow was seriously perturbed by the way in which the Germans were apparently playing with him. They had through their Ambassador at Petersburg held out a definite expectation that a friendly settlement would be arranged at Constantinople by the military Attachés of the two Embassies at Constantinople. When however the German Attaché was approached, he stated that he had no authority for doing anything beyond explaining the position of the German general to his Russian colleague. The German ambassador at Constantinople on his part professed his anxiety for an arrangement, but never went beyond vague words. He had now left Constantinople, and so the discussions there which, according to the German promise, were to have ended in a settlement, never really took place. M. Sazonow felt sure that the German government had no intention whatever of doing anything. They now made use of their ambassador's departure from Constantinople and his forthcoming verbal report at Berlin in order to put off further discussion. The Russian gov[ernmen]t could not allow this to go on. They considered that the ambassadors of Russia, England, and France should now address the German government and ask for a definite answer to the question what the German government contemplated ultimately doing in the matter. The Russian government had no wish to press for something being done now at once, although they thought that to delay action for a month, as Germany had at first suggested, was too long a postponement. But what they want at once is a definite intimation of what Germany will do later on.

I told M. de Etter that the reports we had received from Berlin did not at all bear the impression as if Germany was merely using soft words, and had no intention of doing anything. On the contrary, we gathered that the German Chancellor was most anxious to find a solution of the difficulty satisfactory to Russia. Sir E. Goschen had just had a long conversation with Herr von Jagow (see H[is] E[xcellency's] tel[egram] No. 219—58015),⁽³⁾ in the course of which the latter, referring to the expected arrival at Berlin of Herr von Wangenheim, said he would go thoroughly into the whole matter with the ambassador.

This being so, I thought we could hardly choose this moment for a formal, not to say categorical, demand for an intimation of what the German government intended to do ultimately. Clearly they could give no other answer than that they must first consult Herr von Wangenheim, who was coming to Berlin for this particular purpose; and meanwhile the enquiry of the 3 ambassadors could only cause irritation. It seemed to me that the time for a further representation at Berlin would come if and when it appeared that nothing resulted from Herr von Wangenheim's visit to Berlin. Some few days at least ought to be allowed to the German gov[ernmen]t before approaching them again.

M. de Etter was visibly disappointed at my remarks, although I was careful to explain that all I said was subject to the approval of Sir E. Grey, to whom I would report at once. He said he would like to tell M. Sazonow at least that H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] agreed to make a joint representation at Berlin at the earliest convenient moment. I reminded M. de Etter that Sir E. Grey had himself

(1) [These minutes are endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet. They were repeated in summary by telegram on December 31, 1913, to Berlin (No. 440); to St. Petersburg (No. 816); to Constantinople (No. 596).]

(2) [*cp. supra*, p. 399, No. 450, *min.*, and *note* (?).]

(3) [*v. supra*, pp. 398-9, No. 450.]

suggested the propriety of discussing the matter at Berlin if the Turkish answer were to prove unsatisfactory. Since there had been the prospect of a direct Russo-German arrangement, the Turks had no doubt deliberately refrained from making the further answer we had asked for. And the course which the affair had now taken no doubt pointed logically to the conversations at Berlin being taken up seriously, should no settlement appear in sight, without further regard to any Turkish explanations. M. de Etter asked—and pressed me repeatedly to say—whether I should be in favour of a joint representation of the 3 ambassadors at Berlin. I said this might be considered when the occasion arose, but, as he pressed me, I should say, speaking for myself, that a joint representation would be a great mistake. A formal step of that kind easily assumed the appearance of a threat, and that was the last thing the Germans would be likely to yield to. Each of our ambassadors had his own footing with the Chancellor and with Herr von Jagow, and it would create less irritation if each spoke in his own way and in his own words.

M. de Etter finally repeated M. de Sazonow's expression of disappointment at the lack of support he was receiving from H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] in this matter. I said I could not understand how such a feeling could have arisen. Sir E. Grey had done his best to smooth the way for that direct Russo-German understanding which in M. Sazonow's own opinion offered the best prospect of a satisfactory solution. I then said, speaking without any authority, and expressing my own personal opinion to M. de Etter in private, that whilst M. Sazonow seemed to regret not to see himself as strongly supported as he apparently wished, he had not really made it clear what exactly was the course to be pursued in which he asked for British support. Before the question of such support could arise in a practical sense, it seemed to me that 3 points ought to be definitely considered and stated:

- (1.) What exactly did Russia demand or desire to obtain? Was it (a) the cancellation of the German general's particular appointment? or (b) some suitable compensation to Russia?
- (2.) Supposing the demand, whichever it was, was rejected by the Turkish government, what means did Russia propose to employ to exact either compliance or reparation?
- (3.) Supposing that Germany were to identify herself with the Turkish resistance to Russia, did Russia contemplate pressing her demands to the point of a war with the Triple Alliance?

M. de Etter agreed, also speaking privately, that these points ought to be settled in the mind of the Russian government before anything effective could be undertaken by way of putting pressure on Turkey. But he thought the mere fact of the 3 Powers speaking out at Constantinople would probably suffice to bring about a favourable solution. I said this might possibly be so, although I thought there were some strong indications the other way. But in any case there was the risk that Turkey would not yield to menaces. If, then, Russia was not disposed to look upon the issue as so gravely important as to justify, if necessary, a war in which the whole of Europe might be embroiled, she might end by accepting the Turkish refusal, in which case, the stronger the menaces she and France and England had employed, the weaker would ultimately become the position of the 3 Powers. Clearly it was a problem requiring great circumspection, and one that should not be rushed in a moment of annoyance and irritation, however well justified, at the unfriendly way in which Germany had sprung this question upon Russia.

M. de Etter promised to treat what I had said as strictly private and confidential.

E. A. C.
Dec[ember] 29.

MINUTE.

I approve of all that Sir E. Crowe has said. I believe that the Germans want to find a way out and that a joint representation at Berlin will pose the question in quite a new form

that of a diplomatic conflict between Triple Alliance and Triple Entente in which there will be no alternatives except diplomatic victory or diplomatic defeat. The question should not be allowed to assume this form unless Russia is prepared to make it a *casus belli* and I do not believe it is worth that, or that the modifications needed to make it not worth that cannot be secured by patient pressure without demonstration

I shall be in London on Jan[uary] 5, and can then see Count Benckendorff or M. Etter⁽⁴⁾ and also take the matter up with the German Ambassador.⁽⁵⁾

Meanwhile telegraph⁽⁶⁾ a summary of what M. Etter has said to Sir E. Goschen for his confidential information adding "Without saying this to M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] you should tell him that the Russians remain very seriously concerned, that I am returning to London on Jan[uary] 5, and shall then have to express my view to the Russian Ambassador and that I intend to urge patience as I am convinced that the German Gov[ernment] are trying to arrange the matter with the Russian Gov[ernment], but that the question is becoming increasingly difficult."

E. G.

⁽⁴⁾ [*cp. infra*, pp. 411-2, No. 462.]

⁽⁵⁾ [*cp. infra*, p. 411, No. 461.]

⁽⁶⁾ [Marginal note by Sir Eyre Crowe: "This is being done. E. A. C. Dec[ember] 30." *supra*, note (1). *cp.* also telegram from M. de Etter to M. Sazonov, *Siebert*, p. 696.]

[*ED. NOTE*.—There was a further conversation between M. de Etter and Sir Eyre Crowe on December 31. Sir Edward Grey informed Sir G. Buchanan of it in his despatch (No. 10) of January 10, 1914. He said "that the Russian Chargé d'Affaires told Sir Eyre Crowe on Dec[ember] 31st that M. Sazonov, on receiving M. de Etter's report of his conversation with Sir Eyre Crowe on Dec[ember] 29th, and the answer from the French Gov[ernment] w[hic]h was on lines very similar to what Sir E. Crowe had said, had agreed that it would be wiser to postpone any further representations at Berlin until there had been time to learn the results of the consultation with Baron Wangenheim." Sir Edward Grey added that "Sir Eyre Crowe informed M. de Etter confidentially that Sir E. Grey had meanwhile authorised Sir E. Goschen once more to impress upon the German Gov[ernment] the serious view taken of the situation by the Russian Gov[ernment] and the necessity of dealing with it without delay." (F.O. 554/88/14/44.) *cp.* M. de Etter's telegrams to M. Sazonov of December 31, 1913, *Siebert*, p. 699. For the French answer *v. infra*, p. 404, *Ed. note*.]

No. 453.

Sir E. Goschen to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 384/88/14/44.

(No. 477.)

Sir,

Berlin, D. December 30, 1913.

R. January 5, 1914.

In the course of a conversation which I had on the 27th instant with Herr von Jagow,⁽²⁾ His Excellency alluded to the stir created by the position given to the Head of the German military mission to Turkey by the Ottoman Government. The attitude taken by the Russian Government had been a complete surprise to the Imperial Foreign Office. To go back to the beginning the German Emperor had first mentioned the fact that a military mission was to be sent to Constantinople to the Emperor of Russia on the occasion of His Majesty's visit to Berlin.⁽³⁾ The Emperor of Russia had considered it a perfectly natural proceeding and one that harmonized perfectly with the general wish that the Ottoman Government should be assisted in the work of reform and reorganisation in every way possible. As far as the action of the Imperial Government was concerned they had supplied a successor to General von

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp. 398-9, No. 450.]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 340, No. 378, and note (4).]

der Goltz without any particular stipulation as to the position or powers to be given to him. That was a matter which had been decided by the Ottoman Government. In fact he, Herr von Jagow, when he had heard that General Liman von Sanders had been given the command of the first Army Corps, which had previously been commanded by a Turkish Colonel, had thought that the position was hardly adequate for an officer of General von Sanders' rank! Continuing, he mentioned as a proof that the Imperial Government had considered the despatch of the mission as a perfectly natural and straightforward proceeding, that the Chancellor had not thought it worth while to touch upon the question in his conversations with M. Sazonow on the occasion of the recent visit of the latter to Berlin.⁽¹⁾ It was only when M. Kokowzow arrived that it had dawned on them that so much importance was attached to the affair by the Russian Government.⁽²⁾ He must admit that the attitude of the Russian Government, the strong objections that they had raised, and the violence of the Russian Press, had given him a most unpleasant surprise. Germany had been doing her best to keep friends with Russia and as a matter of fact had rendered her great assistance in her dealings with Austria-Hungary during the events of the last two years. He was therefore all the more astonished that the Russian Government should have taken such a strong line in a matter which appeared to the Imperial Government to be perfectly straightforward and devoid of any offence. He could have understood the attitude of the Russian Government better if the command of the First Army Corps at Constantinople had given General von Sanders the control of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles and their forts. This however was not the case as they were under the control of a Turkish officer commanding quite a different body of troops.

Herr von Jagow added that he had been given to understand that the reason why the Ottoman Government had fixed upon Constantinople as the headquarters of the Military Mission was that all the military schools were located there and that it was absolutely necessary that these should be under the eye of the officer entrusted with the reorganisation of the Turkish army. I told His Excellency that I had heard that there was a good chance of the matter being settled by amicable arrangement. He replied that he had hoped that this would be the case, and that he still hoped so, but that it was not all plain sailing. He foresaw that the Turks would raise difficulties about making any change either with regard to the position they had given to General von Sanders, or to the sphere of his activities; he also foresaw that if the Russian press continued to write violent articles on the subject, it would infallibly increase the difficulties and render the Turks, and others interested in the question, less inclined to make concessions to Russian opinion. This observation of Herr von Jagow gave me an opportunity to say a word of praise for the calm attitude and reserve shown by the German press on this subject and to express the hope that this attitude on its part would be maintained.

His Excellency said that the Imperial Foreign Office had done all in its power to restrain the Press from writing on the subject, but if the Russian newspapers persisted in writing so violently, he could not answer for the continued reticence of the German Press.

In conclusion he said that the German Ambassador in Constantinople was doing all in his power to effect an amicable arrangement, but that the difficulties which he had pointed out made the results of his efforts somewhat doubtful. Baron Wangenheim was coming to Berlin in a few days when the opportunity would be taken to go thoroughly into the matter.⁽³⁾

I have, &c.

W. E. GOSCHEN.

⁽¹⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp. 46-7, No. 54, and note ⁽²⁾.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp. 339-40, No. 378, and note ⁽²⁾.]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. G.P.*, XXXVIII, pp. 283-4. An interview is recorded here between M. Sverbeiev and Baron von Wangenheim on December 30, 1913. *v. also Siebert*, pp. 698-9. A second took place during the next two days, *v. ibid.*, pp. 701-2. Baron von Wangenheim subsequently visited Ireland, in a purely private capacity, to buy horses, *ibid.*, pp. 702-4.]

MINUTE.

The explanations are exceedingly lame and not quite straightforward.

A. N.
E. G.

[*ED. NOTE.*—The text of the French reply to the Russian communication of December 29, 1913, is given in *D.D.F.*, 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VIII, pp. 869-70, No. 689. It is dated December 30. (*cp. supra*, p. 402, *Ed. note.* It contains the assurance "que le Gouvernement de la République est fermement résolu à s'associer à toutes les démarches engagées par le Gouvernement impérial au sujet de la mission du général de Sanders à Constantinople" *cp.* M. Isvolski's report of the same date, *Siebert*, pp. 697-8; *Stieve*, III, p. 437. A second telegram from M. Isvolski added that M. Doumergue's reply was drafted after discussion with M. Paul and M. Jules Cambon, *Siebert*, p. 698; *Stieve*, III, p. 438.]

No. 454.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.

F.O. 57356/49385/13/44.

(No. 435.) Very Confidential.

Sir,

Foreign Office, December 31, 1913.

I have to inform Y[our] E[xcellency] that the Russian Chargé d'Affaires saw Sir Eyre Crowe on Dec[ember] 22nd,⁽¹⁾ and confirmed and extended the information given by Y[our] E[xcellency] in your telegram No. 419 of the 21st instant⁽²⁾ respecting the German military command at Constantinople.

M. de Etter, who said that he was speaking in strict confidence, stated that pourparlers had first been opened between the German and Russian Ambassadors at Constantinople, and Baron Wangenheim suggested that as General von Sanders had assured him that from a military point of view no special importance attached to Constantinople as the seat of the German command, the two military attachés might be left to come to some arrangement by which the Russian objections could be satisfactorily met. The seat of command might be transferred to Adrianople; it would however remain necessary to have a small contingent at Constantinople under the German General's direct orders, for purposes of instruction in connection with the training of the Military School and the Académie de l'Etat Major.

These suggestions, M. de Etter stated, had been taken up at Berlin and put forward at St. Petersburg, where they were received in a friendly manner. The Russian Gov[ernment] did not like the reservation of the "small contingent" at Constantinople remaining under the German command, nor a German suggestion that at least a month should elapse before any change is allowed to be announced. They would prefer a much shorter interval. Some trouble was also anticipated, as the Turkish Gov[ernment] on their part had declared that they would not allow the scheme as already settled between them and Germany to be changed. There was however now good hope of a satisfactory settlement being arrived at.

Meanwhile M. Sazonow was anxious that there should be as few newspaper polemics on the subject as possible, as they only served to create irritation and a public opinion which would make it more difficult for Germany and Turkey to give way. M. de Etter suggested that a hint to this effect given on our part at Berlin might be useful, and a telegram was accordingly despatched to Sir E. Goschen on the 24th of December⁽³⁾ instructing him, if an opportunity occurred, to hint to the German Gov[ernment] how desirable it would be to keep the press quiet and off the subject until an arrangement had been come to.

[I am, &c.
E. GREY.]

⁽¹⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp. 394-6, Nos. 445-6.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 392-3, No. 443.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 396, No. 447.]

Sir E. Goschen to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Private.⁽²⁾

My dear Grey,

Berlin, December 31, 1913.

. . .⁽³⁾ I did not think Jagow seemed very hopeful about an amicable settlement being arrived at with regard to the German Military Mission: but he gave me to understand that the difficulties would come not so much from Germany, unless the Press became too active, as from the Turks. That is as may be—but the fact remains that he did rather shake his head over the prospects of an arrangement. I have never thought that the Foreign Office here was very keen about this Military Mission—and I think they would like to find a way out: and I must say that I don't think the question of 'Prestige' has *as yet* played much of a rôle in Jagow's mind—though he clearly indicated that it would arise if the Russian and French Press continued to write violently on the subject: for once the German Press began answering, everything that had the appearance of concession would raise a howl of indignation.

January 2. Jagow came to see me again yesterday—he was more hopeful and after saying that after all he thought there was a good chance of an amicable arrangement being reached, he described to me the course that might lead to such a result. This was as you will have seen from my telegram⁽⁴⁾ that after General v[on] Sanders had, as commander of an Army Corps, found out all the weak spots of the Turkish Military organisation, he would be given the rank which corresponded to his rank in the German Army (von der Goltz was, I believe, a Field Marshal in the Turkish Army) and consequently relinquish his command of an Army Corps—and be, I presume, something in the nature of an Inspector General without any special command.

Whether this was always the case and Jagow told it to me as an explanation of the real position or whether it is a procedure which it is now proposed to adopt with a view to arriving at a settlement—I was unable to gather as Jagow was slightly vague on that point but I take it that it is the latter—as I, personally, have never heard of it before.

But in any case the procedure described seems to make the position a little easier. The rest of his conversation on this subject was devoted to showing what slight grounds there were for Russia's excitement. But what Jagow does not seem to understand is that however strict the orders to the German Officers are to abstain from any interference in politics and however strictly they may carry out these orders—a certain amount of German political influence will automatically exist by the fact that the command of the 1st Army Corps is in German hands. It will certainly enhance German prestige—and that is political influence of a sort—in the eyes of the Turkish man in the street.

Jagow combats this on the ground that the 1st Army Corps has nothing to do either with the defence of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles—or the maintenance of order in the case of a revolution. But I must confess that Jagow's statement that in the latter case, owing to their orders not to interfere in internal politics, the German officers would all retire into the background, does not carry much conviction into my mind . . .⁽⁵⁾

Since writing the above I have heard that Wangenheim, who is here now, has told my Russian colleague much the same as Jagow told me: but that he also said that the work of preliminary inquiry into the defects of the Turkish Military organisation would naturally take some time. On Sverbéef asking about how much

(1) [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Sir A. Nicolson; to Sir E. Crowe, on January 13, 1914.]

(2) [Grey MSS., Vol. 23.]

(3) [The omitted paragraph refers to purely personal matters.]

(4) [v. immediately succeeding document.]

(5) [The omitted paragraphs refer to Albania and the Ægean Islands, but add nothing to information given elsewhere.]

time would elapse before General von Sanders relinquished his direct command, Wangenheim replied that he supposed that it would take place some time during the current year.⁽⁶⁾ When Sverbeef told me this he said that the year contained 12 months and that he thought that such a vague prospect would hardly satisfy Sazonow.

By the way I must mention that Wangenheim said to Granville, who met him at lunch to-day at Jagow's, that one thing was certain namely that if the Triple Entente Powers tried to exercise pressure on Germany the latter, though now anxious to come to an amicable arrangement, would find it impossible to make any concession whatever.

I think that if Germany could authorize Sazonow to let it be known in Russia that General von Sanders was only in temporary command at Constantinople and that in a few months he would relinquish that command, it would strengthen Sazonow's position and incline him to patience. But I do not know how that would suit Germany's book as regards her own public opinion, and it is perhaps to be doubted whether Germany would authorize any statement except one of too vague a nature to be of any good. But it might be worth while to find out how far Germany would go in that direction.

Yours very sincerely,
W. F. GOSCHEN.

(6) [For Baron von Wangenheim's conversations with M. Sverbeiev, *cp. supra*, p. 403, No. 453, and *note* (6).]

No. 456.

Sir E. Goschen to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 109/88/14/44.

Tel. (No. 1.)

Berlin, January 1, 1914.

Your telegram No. 440.⁽²⁾

Last paragraph acted upon. Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs is very pleased that you will recommend patience, because if, as he hopes, an amicable settlement is to be reached it must take some little time, and if Russia presses too much it will make things more difficult. He seems to think that settlement can be reached somewhat in the following manner: General von Sanders' present position is below his proper rank, and he will probably only hold that position while he is studying the faults of organisation which it will be his duty to rectify. When this is done, he will be promoted, and will relinquish his command of the 1st Army Corps, and will hold post of general supervisor like General von der Goltz.⁽³⁾

After repeating his former statements as to Bosphorus and Dardanelles, and their forts, he said the 1st Army Corps consisted of two divisions, one at Constantinople, and the other at Ismid. Former would be under the command of Turkish officers, and the latter under that of German officers, while, of course, General von Sanders himself would be at Constantinople.

It was one of the chief objections of Russian Government that in case of a revolution the town would be practically in the hands of the German general. This was absolutely out of the question, for German officers in such a case would at once, in accordance with their positive instructions not to interfere in internal politics, retire into the background, leaving the duty of restoring order to Turkish officers and troops who were specially quartered at Constantinople for that purpose.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to St. Petersburg (as No. 3); to Constantinople (as No. 3).]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp. 400-2, No. 452, and *notes* (1) and (6).]

⁽³⁾ [The sense of this telegram was communicated to M. de Etter, who telegraphed accordingly to M. Sazonov on January 5, 1914, *v. Siebert*, p. 703.]

No. 457.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen.*Private.⁽¹⁾

My dear Goschen.

January 2, 1914.

I am so sorry you were laid up when you wrote on December 27⁽²⁾: I hope the influenza is gone or at any rate going.

I don't want us to become the channel of communication with the Prince of Wied or his special mentor and I have therefore been wording my instructions on official papers so that you should make Jagow the channel of communication, or only express views to the Prince of Wied direct when he comes to ask and presses for them.

You will see that Sazonow has pressed for a *démarche* by France, Russia, and ourselves at Berlin about the German command at Constantinople. I don't like to tell the Germans that this is so and that I have refused; it would be neither moral nor expedient to make capital at Berlin out of having refused a Russian request. But I must tell Lichnowsky when I next see him that the Russians are more concerned than ever and must be satisfied somehow. As they had spoken to you about this affair at Berlin I sent you a telegram to speak in this sense.⁽³⁾

I don't believe the thing is worth all the fuss that Sazonow makes about it; but as long as he does make a fuss it will be important and very embarrassing to us: for we can't turn our back upon Russia.

Yours sincerely,
E. GREY.

⁽¹⁾ [Grey MSS., Vol 23.]

⁽²⁾ [Not reproduced. The letter refers chiefly to questions concerning the Prince of Wied, but adds nothing of importance to the material printed on this subject. *cf. supra*, pp 55-129, *passim*.]

⁽³⁾ [*cf. supra*, pp. 400-2, No. 452, and *min.*, and *notes* ⁽¹⁾ and ⁽⁶⁾.]

No. 458.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

St. Petersburg, January 5, 1914.

F.O. 608/88/14/44.

D. 8.30 P.M.

Tel. (No. 3.)

R. 9 P.M.

Minister for Foreign Affairs, whom I saw for a few minutes this afternoon,⁽²⁾ told me that he had failed to induce the German Ambassador to consent to the publication of communiqué respecting course of Russo-German conversation that would tranquillise Russian public opinion, as Ambassador refused to allow mention in it of any assurances having been given by his Government.

Minister for Foreign Affairs said that when first idea had been mooted of transferring the German command to Adrianople, and of leaving General Sanders at Constantinople as nominal general of schools, he had at once expressed to the Ambassador his readiness to accept such a solution provided that the question was not allowed to drag on indefinitely, and he had insisted on the Russian Government receiving at any rate without delay some intimation of German intentions. He had, however, heard nothing since from the Ambassador with regard to the latter request, while, from language held at Berlin, German Government seemed only to contemplate a settlement within the course of the year. To this Russia would never consent. Discussion had already been proceeding six weeks, and Russia could not wait longer than another month, and she would therefore have to consider her future course of action. He was to see the Emperor this afternoon, and would ask His Majesty to authorise the President of the Council, Minister of War, Minister of Marine, and

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram is endorsed as having been sent to the King. It was sent to Constantinople (as No. 7).]

⁽²⁾ [*cf. Siebert*, p. 705.]

Minister for Foreign Affairs to examine the three points raised by Sir E. Crowe (see your telegram No. 440 of Dec[ember] 31 to Berlin).⁽³⁾ He personally was in favour of exercising financial pressure at Constantinople, and after statement made by French Minister of Finance he believed that the French would lend their active co-operation. It would be necessary, however, to be prepared with some second course of action should financial pressure fail, and this would have to take the form of a request for compensation. Though his Excellency used the word "compensation," he seemed rather to be contemplating the occupation of Turkish ports or territory.

In the course of conversation his Excellency said that he had heard through the French Ambassador that the German Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had told British and French Ambassadors at Berlin that the Emperor of Russia, when approached by the Emperor William on the subject last May, had expressed approval of the proposed mission.⁽⁴⁾ On the Emperor William speaking of the previous military mission, the Emperor of Russia had said that he could not consider the despatch of German military instructors to Turkey a very friendly act on the Emperor William's part, as the Turkish army might one day be employed against Russia. The Emperor William had then said that he proposed sending another military mission to Turkey, but without saying a word about executive command now attached to it, and the Emperor of Russia had replied that if this was the case he was glad of having had the opportunity of letting the Emperor William know his views on the subject.

Minister for Foreign Affairs added that, according to German Secretary of State, the Emperor William had also spoken to the King about the contemplated mission, and he would much like to know whether this was really the case.⁽⁵⁾

I am to see Minister for Foreign Affairs again to-morrow after his audience with the Emperor.

(3) [*v. supra*, pp. 400-2, No. 452, and notes ⁽¹⁾ and ⁽⁶⁾]

(4) [*cp. supra*, p. 340, No. 378, and note ⁽¹⁾]

(5) [*cp. infra*, p. 411, No. 462]

No. 459

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

St. Petersburg, January 6, 1914.

F.O. 760/88/14/44.

D. 8 P.M.

Tel. (No. 4.)

R. 9.45 P.M.

My immediately preceding telegram.⁽²⁾

Minister for Foreign Affairs commenced this afternoon by saying that he had again asked the Emperor what had passed between him and the Emperor William, and that His Majesty declared that not one word had been spoken about an effective command, and that there had throughout been only a question of military instructors. His Majesty had spoken to the Emperor William in the terms recorded in my above-mentioned telegram. The Emperor, his Excellency added, showed considerable resentment of what he termed lack of good faith at Berlin.

As a result of the audience, Minister for Foreign Affairs will not propose any fresh action at present. He will wait another week or so in the hope that the German Government will meet Russia's wishes. If there then seems no prospect of this, he will probably suggest that the three Ambassadors at Constantinople should separately, and in as friendly a way as possible, advise the Porte to give way, pointing out that, if this advice is not followed, Turkey will receive no financial assistance of any kind, and will be refused 4 per cent. customs increase. The French, he added, will be the

(1) [This telegram is endorsed as having been sent to the King. It was sent to Constantinople (as No. 8).]

(2) [*v. immediately preceding document.*]

more ready to consent to this financial pressure as they have not sufficient money to meet the calls of Russia and Servia as well as their own loan. He doubted even whether the money promised by a private bank for the purchase of the Brazilian Dreadnought would be forthcoming.

Meanwhile the Committee of four Ministers authorised by the Emperor would meet and elaborate programme of eventual action, to which resort [*sic*: recourse] would only be had in the very last resort. As his Excellency again spoke of such action taking the form of a demand for compensation, I remarked that anything in the nature of occupation of ports or territory, to which he had alluded yesterday, would partake rather of the character of military pressure that would certainly lead to German intervention, and I doubted very much whether His Majesty's Government would associate themselves in such action. His Excellency replied that it was difficult to find compensation for Constantinople, and intimated that if England failed to support Russia after all pacific means had been tried and failed there would be an end to our understanding. On my asking whether, in the event of our being unable to support her, Russia would act alone, Minister for Foreign Affairs replied that he did not like to contemplate such an eventuality, as separate action by Russia would inevitably cause war into which we should be dragged in the end, whereas collective action by the three Powers would accomplish its object without war.

I asked whether it would not be possible for the Emperor, when he saw the German Ambassador on New Year's Day, to make a personal appeal to the Emperor William to accelerate settlement. Minister for Foreign Affairs told me in the strictest confidence that, though the Emperor would not make such an appeal, he would tell the Ambassador how painfully surprised he had been at hearing of the appointment of the German general with effective command without his Government having been previously informed of it, and His Majesty would express his earnest wish for an early and satisfactory solution.

Speaking of the command of the fleet and of the possibility of modifying the status of the British admiral, his Excellency said that the Germans were very much afraid we might recall him. He then alluded to the visit being paid to England by the German Ambassador at Constantinople and warned me that its object was to make a breach in the Anglo-Russian understanding.⁽³⁾ Speaking next of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's recent interview with a journalist,⁽⁴⁾ his Excellency said that the publication of such views by a British Minister at the present moment had not only painfully surprised but seriously alarmed (group omitted: ? him), as they were calculated to encourage Germany in a course that might have serious consequences.

In conclusion his Excellency said that this question of Constantinople had moved Russian public opinion more than almost anything that had happened during the whole course of the Balkan war

MINUTE.

I dealt with the subject in conversation with Prince Lichnowsky and M. Etter yesterday and recorded the substance in telegrams.⁽⁵⁾

E. G

⁽³⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 403, No. 453, note ⁽⁶⁾.]

⁽⁴⁾ [An interview with Mr. Lloyd-George was published in the *Daily Chronicle* on January 1, 1914, and reported in *The Times* on the following day, under the heading "Overwhelming Extravagance of Armaments."]

⁽⁵⁾ [*v. infra*, pp. 411-2, Nos. 461-2.]

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 1430/88/14/44.

(No. 7.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, D. January 6, 1914.

R. January 13, 1914.

In continuation of my despatch No. 394 of the 25th ultimo.⁽¹⁾ I have the honour to inform you that, though most of the other papers have lately maintained silence on the subject of the German Mission the "Novoe Vremya" has carried on its campaign of criticism unabated.

Commenting on the arrangement by which General von Sanders would remain at Constantinople as a member of the Supreme Military Council and Inspector of military schools while another German General would be appointed commandant of Adrianople, the "Novoe Vremya" says that it really seems incredible that Russia should accept this so called "compromise," and, moreover, insist on its immediate execution. It points out that the compromise consists in giving still wider powers to the German Generals. General von Sanders would perhaps not have actual command of the First Army Corps but it would be at his disposal for carrying out the measures recommended by him. Thus he would have the real command of the Corps while another German General would have command of Turkey's second Capital, Adrianople.

On the day following the publication of this article the "Novoe Vremya," which has never ceased bitterly to criticise Russia's policy in the German Mission question, suddenly discovered that Monsieur Sazonow's policy was due to the fear of embarrassing the German Chancellor who might well be succeeded by a less pacific statesman than was Herr von Bethmann Hollweg. And in its next issue it expressed the view that the German Mission was a mere episode of no importance except as portending the dissolution of the Turkish Empire.

But this lull in the storm of criticism, to whatever cause it may have been due, was of short duration; and the "Novoe Vremya" has now resumed its daily diatribe against the Government, varied only by the addition of hints as to where the screw could be applied which would induce Germany to see reason in the Constantinople question. Germany might for instance be reminded of Russia's potential influence on the construction in Persia of a Railway for German commerce, though as a matter of fact Germany had now gained in the Bosphorus more than ever she could lose in Persia. Or Russia might withdraw her money from German Banks and thus compel Turkey once more to listen to Russia.

In an article published yesterday, the "Novoe Vremya" reviews a century of Russo-German friendship which, it says, has resulted in the forging of "a Teutonic ring round Slavdom," begun in 1813 when Russia freed Prussia from the Napoleonic yoke—thus laying the foundations of the German Empire—and completed in 1913 by the creation of an Austrian Albania and of a German Anatolia and finally by the "seizure of the Straits by Germany." The article concludes by saying that the principal aim of Russian foreign policy must now be to break this ring and that only by such a policy will Russia gain the firm support of France and England.

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 397, No. 448.]

No. 461.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen ⁽¹⁾

F.O. 760/88/14/44.

Tel. (No. 4.)

Foreign Office, January 7, 1914, 8.15 P.M.

I told German Ambassador to-day⁽²⁾ that question of German command at Constantinople was causing me more anxiety than all other questions together.

I believed that German Gov[ernmen]t really wished to find some way out of the difficulty and as long as this was so I had urged that there should be no ostentatious demonstration that would make it difficult for German Gov[ernmen]t to come to an arrangement with Russia.

German Ambassador confirmed impression that German Gov[ernmen]t want to find a way of satisfying Russia, but said it would take time and meanwhile any demonstration such as a *démarche* by the Triple Entente at Constantinople would make everything impossible. He indicated some anxiety as to whether a step of this kind was in contemplation.

I said that for the present I had spoken to Russian Chargé d'Affaires⁽³⁾ in the sense of what I had just said to the Ambassador: I was going away to-night and should return on the 19th, but if no progress had been made in the negotiations between Germany and Russia by then I feared that I should be confronted with a very unpleasant situation. The Russians were getting very impatient and would feel it necessary to take some step to secure their own position in Turkey to make up for the position acquired by a German General at Constantinople. I could not say what action Russia might take there but it would open up a very large and difficult question. I suggested that if German Gov[ernmen]t could not agree at once to some modification of the German command at Constantinople they might agree with Russian Gov[ernmen]t on some announcement that the position of General Liman von Sanders was temporary and would be revised.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Paris (No. 4); to St. Petersburg (No. 5); to Constantinople (No. 10); for information.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. G.P., XXXVIII, pp. 291-3.*]

⁽³⁾ [*v. immediately succeeding document*]

No. 462.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan. ⁽¹⁾

F.O. 760/88/14/44.

Tel. (No. 7.)

Foreign Office, January 7, 1914, 8.45 P.M.

Your tel[egram]s Nos. 3 and 4.⁽²⁾

I have told Russian Chargé d'Affaires that I am enquiring whether the King has any recollection of the question of the German officers at Constantinople having been mentioned by the German Emperor, but it seemed to me quite out of the question that the German Emperor should have said anything to the King more than to the Emperor of Russia at Berlin.⁽³⁾

Visit of German Ambassador at Constantinople to England has not been mentioned to me by German Ambassador here or by German Gov[ernmen]t. I do not believe it has any political object nor have I had any intimation direct or indirect that the German Ambassador at Constantinople will ask even to see me.⁽⁴⁾

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Berlin (No. 5); to Paris (No. 6); to Constantinople (No. 12). For M. de Etter's account of the conversation here recorded *v. Siebert*, pp. 705-6.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 407-9, Nos. 458-9.]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 340, No. 378, *note* ⁽⁴⁾]

⁽⁴⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 403, No. 453, *note* ⁽⁶⁾; p. 409, No. 459.]

I told Russian Chargé d'Affaires of intention of Russian M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] to wait a week or so before proposing any new step: I said I still believed that Germany really wanted to find a way out and that as long as this was so there should be no ostentatious demonstration and the question should be handled as quietly as possible, but that I should impress upon German Ambassador this afternoon⁽¹⁾ the importance of settling the question with Russia.

(⁵) [v. immediately preceding document]

No. 463.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.(¹)

F.O. 1433/88/14/44.

(No. 10.) Confidential.

St. Petersburg, D. January 7, 1914.

Sir:—

R. January 12, 1914.

Despite the anxiety professed by the German Government to settle the question of their Military Mission at Constantinople in a manner satisfactory to Russia, little progress has been made during the past fortnight towards a solution.

Monsieur Sazonow had welcomed the proposal, made to him by Count Pourtales, to the effect that the German and Russian Military Attachés at Constantinople should confer together and endeavour to arrive at an understanding; but he was disagreeably surprised to find that, contrary to what he had been led to expect, the German Military Attaché was restricted by his instructions to the discussion of mere questions of detail. When subsequently he expressed to Count Pourtales his readiness to accept a solution under which the effective command over the Turkish troops would have been entrusted to a German General at Adrianople, while General von Sanders would have remained at Constantinople as Inspector General of the Military Schools, he was given to understand that German prestige would not admit of the immediate carrying out of such an arrangement and was told that the German Government would not be hustled. His hopes were again aroused by the language which Herr von Jagow held to the Russian Ambassador on New Year's day⁽²⁾; but they were once more extinguished when he discovered that any modifications which the German Government might be disposed to accept with regard to General von Sanders' command would only be carried out "im Laufe des Jahres"—within the course of the year. His Excellency has also been left without an answer to his request that the German Government should at any rate give him some confidential intimation of their intentions, while he has failed to obtain their consent to the publication of a *communiqué* that would tranquillize Russian public opinion with regard to the present course of the negotiations.

At the same time both His Excellency and the Emperor are much incensed at the story, which Herr von Jagow has been circulating, that His Majesty had, on being informed of the proposed Mission by the Emperor William during His stay at Berlin last May,⁽³⁾ not only raised no objections, but had actually expressed approval of it. The Emperor, whom Monsieur Sazonow has twice questioned on the subject, positively asserts that not one word was ever said of an effective command and that the Emperor William had only spoken to Him of Military Instructors. So far from expressing any approval, the Emperor had said that he did not consider it a very friendly act on the Emperor William's part to be always sending German Officers to reorganise the Turkish Army, as that Army might one day be employed against Russia. As the Emperor expressed exactly similar views to me at an Audience, which I had with His Majesty last April, there can, I think, be no doubt that His account of what passed between Him and the Emperor William is correct.

(¹) [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe; to Lord Morley.]

(²) [*cp. Siebert*, pp. 701-2.]

(³) [*cp. supra*, p. 340, No. 378, note (⁴).]

The Emperor returned to Tsarskoe Selo from the Crimea on New Year's Day and at an Audience, which Monsieur Sazonow had on the 5th instant, His Excellency informed His Majesty of the three questions which Sir Eyre Crowe, as reported in your telegram No. 440 to Berlin of the 31st ultimo,⁽¹⁾ had submitted to Monsieur de Etter; and he was authorised by the Emperor to discuss them with the President of the Council and with the Ministers of War and of Marine and to elaborate a programme of eventual action, to which however recourse would only be had in the very last resort. In the meantime Monsieur Sazonow seems disposed to await for another week or ten days some further communication from Berlin. If none is then forthcoming and if there seems no prospect of arriving at an amicable understanding with the German Government, he will, as at present advised, propose that the Ambassadors of France, Great Britain and Russia should make separate and friendly representations to the Porte and convey at the same time the warning that, if Turkey refuses to listen to their advice, she will receive neither financial assistance nor the 4% Customs increase. Monsieur Sazonow is a firm believer in the efficacy of this financial pressure, though he recognises that, if it fails, we must be prepared to take more stringent measures. Till he has conferred with his colleagues he cannot say precisely what form those measures ought, in the opinion of the Russian Government, to take. Though he at first talked of a request for compensation he could specify none that would indemnify Russia for the privileged position which Germany is attempting to acquire at Constantinople. Any proposals therefore that the Russian Government are likely to submit to us will, to judge by his language, take the form of the occupation of some Turkish ports or of some portion of Turkish territory.

The tone which M. Sazonoff had adopted in our recent conversations conveyed to me the impression that he confidently counted on the support of His Majesty's Government in bringing active pressure to bear on Turkey should all our attempts to come to an understanding with Germany prove fruitless. As I did not feel justified in encouraging him in this idea, I pointed out that even friendly representations, such as he had suggested should be made by the three Ambassadors at Constantinople, accompanied as they would be by the threat of financial pressure, might not leave Germany indifferent, while anything in the shape of the occupation of a port would almost certainly lead to German intervention in one form or another. I had personally, I said, some doubts as to whether His Majesty's Government would be prepared to go as far as this. His Excellency replied that England surely could not allow Germany to establish herself at Constantinople and intimated pretty plainly that, were she to fail to support Russia in a question of such vital moment to her, the result would be fatal to the Anglo-Russian understanding. On my sounding him as to whether, in the event of His Majesty's Government being unable to participate in coercive measures against Turkey, Russia would act alone, His Excellency said that he would rather not contemplate such an eventuality, as isolated action by Russia would lead to a war into which England would in the end inevitably be drawn.

Without wishing to be an alarmist I fear that, if the German Government in their anxiety to guard against any possible loss of prestige, allow the question of General Sanders' retention of the command at Constantinople to remain in suspense much longer, the situation will become very critical. Rightly or wrongly the Russian Government believe that the German Government are endeavouring to acquire a veiled protectorate over Constantinople and that, though the Straits and the Bosphorus are outside General von Sanders' jurisdiction, he will be in a position to exercise an indirect control over them. M. Delcassé, with whom I have had several conversations of late, shares this view. The Young Turks, he believes, have sold themselves to Germany, who is preparing the way for eventually seizing the lion's share of the spoils when, at no distant date, the day of the liquidation of the Turkish Empire in Asia arrives. His Excellency has, moreover, on more than one occasion, expressed the

(4) [v. *supra*, pp. 400-2, No. 452, and notes ⁽¹⁾ and ⁽⁶⁾.]

opinion that Germany believes that she can exploit the Triple Entente with impunity and that she will continue in this belief until we have undeceived her by taking a firm stand on some one question or another. I am not aware whether M. Delcassé has spoken in the above sense to M. Sazonow or not, but I have been much struck by the firm tone which he has adopted in speaking about General von Sanders' appointment as compared with the language which he held to me at the time of the reoccupation of Adrianople by the Turks.⁽⁵⁾ He was then most anxious that Russia should take no military action against Turkey for fear lest it might furnish Germany with a pretext for intervening whereas now he seems inclined to think that it is incumbent on us to present a united front to Germany and to adopt a more resolute tone than heretofore. The question of Constantinople is of course of infinitely greater importance from an international point of view than that of Adrianople, and he also realizes that it is one which touches Russia to the quick. As such, it will constitute the touchstone by which the value of the French alliance and of English friendship will be tested by Russian public opinion; and it is for these reasons no doubt that he looks upon it in a very different light to questions, which, like that of Adrianople, were of secondary importance for Russia. During the past year the Russian Government have given many proofs of their pacific disposition, partly from their natural reluctance to create international complications that might involve them in war and partly from their desire to keep in line with England and France, who have not been sparing of counsels of prudence and moderation. I believe, however, that M. Sazonow is right in declaring that, though it has not found such a violent form of expression, Russian public opinion has been more deeply moved by the present incident than by any of the questions that came to the fore during the two Balkan wars. In his conduct of the negotiations with the German Government His Excellency has throughout approached the question in a conciliatory spirit and, by expressing himself ready to accept a settlement that has been strongly condemned by the Russian Press, he has gone as far as it is possible for him to go in the direction of compromise. It is therefore but natural that he should expect the German Government to meet him half way by giving effect to the proposed arrangement within a reasonable time and, should this expectation be disappointed, it would be rash to count on Russia acting, as she did on more than one occasion last year, and taking refuge in a policy of simple renunciation.

I have, &c.

[GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.]

⁽⁵⁾ [For the French attitude on this subject generally, *v. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II), pp. 937-8, No. 1180; p. 941, No. 1186]

No. 464.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.

Constantinople, January 8, 1914.

F.O. 1064/88/14/33.

D. 3.20 P.M.

Tel. (No. 15.)

R. 3.45 P.M.

Imperial Iradé, dated yesterday,⁽¹⁾ promulgates changes in high military appointments and placing on the retired list a large number of former prominent generals and officers, about 280 in all. More important announcements are following; General Liman's appointment to the command of the First Army Corps is confirmed. Mahmud Mukhtar from the Embassy at Berlin to Third Army Inspector at Erzincan on the

⁽¹⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 361, No. 406, *note* (2).]

Russian frontier. Emer (? Enver) Pasha takes the Chief of the Staff in addition to War Minister. The Sub-Chief of the General Staff is Hakki Bey, a contemporary of Enver, and formerly military Attaché at Vienna. It is rumoured that an additional Sub-Chief will be a German Officer.

The Superior Council of War has been suppressed. Mahmud Mukhtar's appointment will not be agreeable to Russia.

Provisional Law just gazetted sanctioning a Supplementary credit of over three million pounds Turkish from January to March, 1914.

No. 465.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

St. Petersburg, January 8, 1914.

F.O. 1070/88/14/44.

D. 8.35 P.M.

Tel. (No. 6.)

R. 9.15 P.M.

My telegram No. 4 of Jan[uary] 6.⁽²⁾

Minister for Foreign Affairs sent for the French Ambassador and myself this afternoon and said that Russia was on the eve of signing an agreement with Turkey regulating her economic and railway interests in Asia Minor. Its signature would carry with it Russia's consent to 4 per cent. customs increase within a delay of six months. Great Britain and France were also negotiating agreements with Turkey under which the latter would acquire the right to levy these duties. The question of the German military mission must not, however, be lost sight of, and if we now signed our respective agreements we should no longer be able to threaten Turkey with a refusal of 4 per cent. customs increase. Financial pressure would then be restricted to closing the French market to any Turkish loans, and this might not be sufficient.⁽³⁾ In that case we might have to resort to the more drastic measures now under the consideration of the committee of four Ministers, whereas he had always advocated recourse to financial pressure in the first instance as being likely to prove efficacious in view of the straitened circumstances of the Turks. The question therefore arose, ought we to sacrifice our agreements so as to retain the 4 per cent. as a weapon to be used in case of necessity? Anxious as he was to get all questions affecting Russian interests in Turkey settled, he was willing to make the sacrifice provided that His Majesty's Government and the French Government would do the same.

The French Ambassador and I promised to telegraph to our respective Governments and ask for an early answer, as the Turks have been pressing his Excellency to sign.

MINUTES.

We can wait to hear what views the French Government hold before replying—but at first sight I confess that I am not in favour of "sacrificing our agreements" with Turkey in connection with the German Mil[itar]y Mission. Moreover there is no necessity for us to make this sacrifice, as our consent to the 4% increase depends, I understand, on *all* the Powers concurring in the increase—and if Russia withholds her consent the increase would not come into operation. Furthermore I do not like the expression in the telegram "*we might have to resort to more drastic measures.*" I am afraid that M. Sazonow desires to take for granted that both France and ourselves will co-operate actively in any measure the Russian Gov[ernmen]t may devise or contemplate. This is too wide an assumption. We are quite ready to use

(1) [This telegram was sent to Paris (as No. 10). In a succeeding telegram (No. 11), of January 9 (F.O. 1070/88/14/44), Sir F. Bertie was instructed to ask the "M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] what views the French Gov[ernmen]t take of M. Sazonow's suggestion."]

(2) [*v. supra*, pp. 408-9, No. 459.]

(3) [*cp.* M. Sazonov's telegram to Paris of January 2, 1914, *Siebert*, p. 702.]

our good offices with Germany towards a satisfactory arrange[men]t and we should raise no objections to any measures which Russia might think fit to adopt to establish her position and safeguard her interests—but there is, in present cir[cumstan]ces, to my mind, no reason why we should go further in that direction.

A. N.

Sir A. Nicolson's minute expresses my view also on the general question

As to the 4% we cannot ourselves introduce new conditions. We have I think signed most of the agreements and promised some time ago to sign what remains as soon as Turkey is in a position to sign. In other words before the question of the German command at Constantinople arose, we had definitely committed ourselves not to press for anything else in connection with the 4%. But I think it is clear that the 4% cannot be levied on British goods till it is levied on all others: if so we can point that out to the French Gov[ernmen]t in asking their views, but say that it is too late for us to reopen the negotiations with Turkey about the 4% by introducing new conditions.

E. G.

No. 466.

Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 1670/88/14/44.

(No. 19.) Confidential.

Paris, D. January 11, 1914.

Sir:—

R. January 13, 1914.

I had the honour to receive on the afternoon of the 9th instant your telegraphic instructions of that date No. 11,⁽²⁾ and I had an interview with the President of the Council, Minister for Foreign Affairs, yesterday in order to discuss with him the suggestions made by the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, as reported to you by His Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg, in his telegram No. 6 of the 8th instant,⁽³⁾ for dealing with the question of the German Military Mission in Turkey.

At the beginning of our conversation M. Doumergue had not received from the French Ambassador at St. Petersburg his telegraphic report of M. Sazonow's views. It was brought to him by his Chef de Cabinet on his enquiring whether M. Delcassé had not reported on the subject. As I had the honour to inform you by my telegram No. 4 of yesterday,⁽⁴⁾ M. Delcassé's report of M. Sazonow's views differs from those expressed to Sir George Buchanan, for the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs stated to His Majesty's Ambassador that he would be ready to sacrifice the advantages to Russia of signing the Turco-Russian Agreement which had been negotiated and the signature of which would entail the consent of Russia to a 4 % increase of Turkish customs within a delay of six months, and His Excellency would do so provided that England and France would act in like matter in regard to the Anglo-Turkish and Franco-Turkish agreements. The French Ambassador's report however states that Russia while ready to initial her arrangement with Turkey proposes to retain her freedom to exercise conjointly with France and England the requisite financial pressure by withdrawing her consent to the arrangement coming into force. M. Doumergue has telegraphed to the French Ambassador asking for further information.

In discussing M. Sazonow's views as reported by Sir George Buchanan I suggested to M. Doumergue that possibly the Russian Minister did not expect the French and British Governments to feel able to make the sacrifices which His Excellency suggested in which event he might come to some arrangements with the German and Turkish Governments regardless of French and British interests, and plead the want of support given to Russia by France and England as a justification for such arrangements.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document, note ⁽¹⁾.]

⁽³⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

⁽⁴⁾ [Sir F. Bertie's telegram (No. 4), D. January 10, 1914, R. January 11, 1914, is not reproduced as the contents are sufficiently indicated above. (F.O. 1372/88/14/44.)]

M. Doumergue thought this quite possible. It would be a very heavy sacrifice for France to have to withhold all pecuniary assistance to Turkey where she had in one way or another some £160,000,000 invested. It might lead to a declaration of bankruptcy by the Porte. The Franco-Turkish Agreement was already initialled and the French Government could not withhold their signature of it. Their consent to the imposition on French goods of the additional 4% Turkish customs duties was contingent on their imposition on the goods of all foreign countries and it would be in the power of the Russian Government to put pressure on the German Government as well as the Porte by withholding, pending a satisfactory settlement of the German Military Mission question, their acquiescence in the additional customs duties for they were required by Germany as a guarantee for the Bagdad railway as well as by the Porte for Turkish needs. M. Doumergue had not been made acquainted by the Russian Government with the particulars of the agreement which they were about to sign with the Porte on the subject of Russian economic and railway interests in Asia Minor. The information which reached him from Constantinople was that the agreement would be of a far-reaching character.

As to the suggestion made by M. Sazonow that if the Russian, French and British Governments signed their respective agreements with the Turkish Government, there would remain as a means of financial pressure only the closing of the Paris market to all Turkish borrowing, M. Doumergue observed that the Porte would in such a case seek and obtain financial assistance in Germany and elsewhere as it had done before to the detriment of French interests.

M. Doumergue wondered what would be the "mesures plus énergiques" which the Russian Government would contemplate if financial pressure on the Porte failed to effect what Russia desired. He said that the question of the German command at Constantinople being a matter which primarily affected Russia, the Russian Government should in the first instance make use of the financial pressure which they could put on the Turkish and German Governments and not ask France and England to sacrifice or jeopardize their interests.

M. Doumergue told me that he had learnt that in the negotiation of the Russo-Turkish Agreement one of the requirements of the Russian Government had been that a Russian Delegate should be admitted to the Council of Administration of the Ottoman Debt. To this the Porte had consented on the condition that the Russian demand did not entail a like demand for representation by any other unrepresented Power, the present status quo, except as regarded a Russian delegate, being maintained. This Turkish condition in view of the German claim for a second delegate and the Presidency every third year made the Russian application abortive.

M. Doumergue promised to send me a summary of his views which he did soon after I left him and I forwarded it to you in my telegram of yesterday evening. His Excellency is of opinion that if the French Government refuse or merely postpone the Turkish loan it will perhaps not be decisive as Turkey could probably find on another market sums sufficient for her urgent needs and await circumstances favourable to a large financial operation.

I have, &c.

FRANCIS BERTIE.

No. 467.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir G. Buchanan.

Private.⁽¹⁾

My dear Buchanan:—

Foreign Office, January 13, 1914.

I came back last week from my trip abroad and feel very much better for it. I hope the improvement which your doctors in London were able to effect has continued, and that you have been able to endure the terrible cold, which I hear has existed in Petersburg, without any evil effects.

⁽¹⁾ [Carnock MSS., Vol. I of 1914.]

I do trust that some arrangement will be arrived at between Russia and Germany in regard to the German military mission, as it would be very awkward if the Russian Government found themselves compelled to go to any serious lengths for the purpose of re-establishing their position and for safeguarding their interests at Constantinople. It would be tiresome if the latter eventuality occurred and if Sazonoff expected us to go to the same lengths which Russia might be compelled to go herself. I think that our view is that we are quite ready to use to the utmost our good offices at Berlin for the purpose of facilitating an arrangement and that should such an arrangement fail we should raise no objections to any measures which Russia might consider herself called upon to take; but I do doubt if Sazonoff would find us willing to take any really serious active measures against Turkey in the matter. It is for this reason that I am so anxious that the matter should be amicably settled between Berlin and Petersburg, as it would be most unfortunate if any severe strain is placed upon our relations with Russia. . . .⁽²⁾

[Yours &c.,
A. NICOLSON.]

⁽²⁾ [The omitted paragraphs refer to Albania, the Ægean Islands, and Thibet, but add nothing of importance.]

No. 468.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 3591/88/14/44.

(No. 22.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, D. January 20, 1914.

R. January 26, 1914.

With reference to my despatch No. 10 of the 7th instant,⁽¹⁾ I have the honour to enclose copy of the letter addressed by the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs to the German Ambassador on the question of General von Sanders' Mission, of which a summary was transmitted in my telegram No. 8 of the 10th of this month.⁽²⁾

Owing to the favourable turns which events have since taken, the question of the publication of a communiqué of the kind suggested in this letter has been dropped, as, though the German Government have not yet fixed the date on which the final settlement of this incident is to be officially announced, the Emperor Nicolas informed the German Ambassador on New Year's day that he considered the question as "aplani."⁽³⁾

Monsieur Sazonoff is perfectly satisfied with the arrangement, under which General von Sanders is, like General von der Goltz, to be Inspector General of the Turkish Army, while a German officer is to act as Chief of the Staff. There is but one point, on which he is still not quite clear, namely whether or not a German General is to have the command of a Division at Scutari. To this, as he told the German Ambassador in a recent conversation,⁽⁴⁾ he could not consent; but, on his pressing Count Pourtalès to telegraph to Berlin on the subject, the latter declined saying that his Government had submitted to a diplomatic discomfiture solely because the Emperor William had wished to do all he could to meet the wishes of the Emperor Nicolas. Were he now to telegraph what Monsieur Sazonoff had said to him, the Emperor William would be annoyed and matters would only be made worse.

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 412-4, No. 463.]

⁽²⁾ [Sir G. Buchanan's telegram enclosing a summary of M. Sazonov's letter is (No. 11) of January 12, D. 9 P.M., R. 10.30 P.M. It is not reproduced as its contents are given more fully above. (F.O. 1667/88/14/44.)]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. infra*, p. 420, No. 469.]

⁽⁴⁾ [*cp. G.P.*, XXXVIII, pp. 293-7.]

On my asking Monsieur Sazonoff what he would do, supposing he found that the command of the Scutari Division was to be given to a German officer, His Excellency replied that he would have to settle the matter direct with Turkey.

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

Enclosure in No. 468.

Lettre adressée par le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères à l'Ambassadeur d'Allemagne à St. Petersbourg en date du 29 Decembre 1913/11 Janvier 1914.

Lors de notre entretien auquel se réfère ma lettre précédente, nous avons touché, ainsi que Votre Excellence voudra bien se le rappeler, la question d'un communiqué à la presse concernant la question de la mission militaire allemande à Constantinople. Nous avons envisagé l'opportunité d'un pareil communiqué pour mettre fin à l'effervescence croissante de notre opinion publique sur les (?) effets de laquelle je n'ai pas manqué d'attirer Votre attention. Le communiqué en question, ne pouvant être rédigé pour le moment qu'en termes généraux, il me semble, toutefois, qu'il ne saurait être fait à la presse qu'à la condition que les deux Gouvernements intéressés tombent d'accord sur les principes généraux du compromis.

Sans récapituler les arguments bien connus à Votre Excellence, je crois pouvoir formuler brièvement [*sic*] le point de vue du Gouvernement IMPERIAL de la manière suivante :

1—Le Gouvernement IMPERIAL ne soulève aucune objection contre la mission d'instructeurs du Général Sanders et des officiers allemands sous ses ordres.

2—Si le Général Liman von Sanders était d'avis que son rôle d'instructeur pourrait être rempli avec plus d'efficacité en commandant une unité de troupes, le choix d'Andrinople comme résidence de l'Instructeur Général et Commandant de cette unité (corps ou division) paraîtrait répondre à ce but sans soulever d'objections de la part du Gouvernement IMPERIAL mû par le désir de maintenir les meilleurs rapports avec l'Empire d'Allemagne.

3—Par contre, le Gouvernement IMPERIAL estime que le commandement par un officier étranger d'une unité quelconque à Constantinople ou ses environs tels que Scutari créerait une disparité de conditions pour les Grandes Puissances ayant leurs Représentants à Constantinople. Vu les intérêts de toute première importance de la Russie à Constantinople, le Gouvernement IMPERIAL a cru devoir attirer l'attention amicale du Cabinet de Berlin sur le bien fondé de ses représentations à ce sujet.

4—Le Gouvernement Impérial Allemand ayant bien voulu faire entendre qu'un compromis dans ce sens pourrait avoir lieu dans quelque temps le Gouvernement IMPERIAL croit devoir attirer son attention sur l'opportunité d'y arriver à bref délai, tout attermoisement [*sic*] exerçant une répercussion fâcheuse sur l'opinion publique et ne pouvant que nuire aux liens d'amitié entre les deux Empires. Il appartiendra au Cabinet de Berlin de vouloir bien nous aviser du terme approximatif qu'il trouve nécessaire de fixer.

5—Si la manière de voir du Gouvernement IMPERIAL développée dans les points précédents est partagée par le Gouvernement Impérial d'Allemagne, un communiqué à l'Agence de S[ain]t Pétersbourg qui serait reproduit par l'Agence Wolff, ou bien par les journaux officiels à Berlin pourrait, d'après l'avis du Gouvernement IMPERIAL servir à apaiser la nervosité publique.

6—Le communiqué en question pourrait être rédigé ainsi que suit :

“ L'Agence télégraphique de S[ain]t Pétersbourg apprend de source autorisée que l'acuité de la question des attributions de la mission militaire allemande à Constantinople a été exagérée par la presse. Les deux Gouvernements espèrent arriver à bref délai à une solution satisfaisant leurs intérêts réciproques et répondant aux liens d'amitié unissant les deux Empires.”

En portant ce qui précède à la connaissance de Votre Excellence, je lui saurai gré de m'informer aussitôt que faire se pourra de la résolution que le Gouvernement Impérial d'Allemagne voudra bien prendre à cet égard.

No. 469.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir A. Nicolson.⁽¹⁾

Private.⁽²⁾

My dear Nicolson,

St. Petersburg, January 21, 1914

I was very glad to hear from your letter,⁽³⁾ received by last bag, that you are feeling all the better for your trip to the South of France.

The von Sanders incident seems to be on the high road to a settlement. At the usual Diplomatic reception on New Year's Day the Emperor told the German Ambassador that He regarded the incident as "aplani," in consequence, as Sazonow told me, of a telegram which He had received from the Emperor William. His Imperial Majesty consequently refrained from telling Pourtales that He had been painfully surprised to hear of General von Sanders' appointment to the command of the First Army Corps without His Government having received any intimation of this appointment beforehand. I ventured to ask the Emperor whether He had said anything to Pourtales of the conversation which, according to Jagow, took place between Him and the Emperor William on the subject at Berlin⁽⁴⁾; but His Majesty replied that He was reserving this for a future occasion. Sazonow is perfectly satisfied with the arrangement under which von Sanders will become Inspector-General of the Turkish Army, while a German Officer will act as Chief of the Staff; but I rather doubt whether the Russian public will share this satisfaction. We, however, have every reason to be thankful that Sazonow is so easily satisfied, as otherwise we should have found ourselves in a very awkward position. There is still, however, one point which is not quite clear, namely whether a German General is to have command of the Scutari Division. Sazonow told Pourtales the other day that he could not consent to this, as Scutari was a suburb of Constantinople, and asked him to telegraph to Berlin on the subject. Pourtales however refused saying that it was only out of His regard for the Emperor Nicholas that the Emperor William had allowed His Government to suffer a diplomatic discomfiture and that the latter would be very angry were he, Pourtales, to intervene further in the matter.

In the few minutes conversation which I had with the Emperor I delivered the messages with which the King had charged me and told Him how anxious His Majesty was to see the relations between the two countries become more friendly every day and how much His Majesty hoped that we should always be able to overcome any little differences which might from time to time arise. I added that Sir Edward had, both in his conversations with Lichnowsky and through Goschen at Berlin, done all that was possible to induce the German Government to arrange the von Sanders incident in a manner satisfactory to Russia, as he had felt that it was at Berlin and not at Constantinople that a settlement must be sought. The Emperor agreed and seemed to be perfectly satisfied with the support that we had given His Government. He warmly reciprocated the King's wishes, saying that our relations were now so good that He did not see why there should ever be differences between us. . . .⁽⁵⁾

Ever yours,

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

⁽¹⁾ [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe; to Lord Morley. The endorsement is initialled by Sir Edward Grey.]

⁽²⁾ [Carnock MSS., Vol. I of 1914.]

⁽³⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 417-8, No. 467.]

⁽⁴⁾ [cp. *supra*, p. 340, No. 378, note ⁽⁴⁾; p. 402, No. 453.]

⁽⁵⁾ [The rest of this letter is not reproduced as it deals with Asiatic questions. The post-script is quoted in the minute to the immediately succeeding document.]

No. 470.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾*Constantinople, January 24, 1914.*

F.O. 3505/88/14/44.

D. 4.10 P.M.

Tel. (No. 57.)

R. 7.30 P.M.

In case Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs raises question of command by a German of division at Scutari, he should realise that (until it was treated here) it is a point on which German Government could not give way. Post was occupied by Schellendorf, who is now Sub-Chief of Staff, and it will almost certainly be filled by a German.

Triple *Entente* is supposed to have won a victory over this question, and it would spoil the effect if we raised another point.

MINUTE.

In a private letter from Sir G. Buchanan he writes in a P.S. "Sazonow has just told me that the question of the Scutari command has been settled and he is consequently jubilant."⁽²⁾

A. N.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to St. Petersburg (as No. 39), with the following addition: "I trust however that this point will not be raised and you need say nothing to M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs]. E. G."]

⁽²⁾ [cp. immediately preceding document, *note* (2); cp. also *infra*, p. 422, No. 472, *note* (3).]

No. 471.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir L. Mallet.

F.O. 2739/88/14/44.

(No. 51.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 26, 1914.

With reference to previous correspondence respecting the German military mission to Constantinople, I have to inform Y[our] E[xcellency] that the Secretary of the German Embassy called at this Office on the 15th inst[ant], and told Sir W. Tyrrell that he had been instructed to state that the rank of General of Cavalry had been conferred on General Liunan von Sanders. This promotion, Herr von Schubert said, would lead to his being appointed a Marshal in the Turkish Army, and this again would lead to his relinquishing the command of the First Army Corps.⁽¹⁾

Herr von Schubert added that the German Gov[ernment] hoped that this would close the incident.

[I am, &c.

E. GREY.]

⁽¹⁾ [cp. *G.P.*, XXXVIII, p. 302; *Siebert-Benckendorff*, III, pp. 244-8.]

No. 472.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Constantinople, January 31, 1914.

F.O. 4555/88/14/44.

D. 2·30 P.M.

(No. 71.) Very Confidential.

R. 4·15 P.M.

My telegram No. 57 of Jan[uary] 24.⁽²⁾

Russian Chargé d'Affaires tells me in confidence that Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs more than once has instructed him to urge Turkish Government not to appoint German officer to command of 3rd Division of Army Corps at Scutari.

Division is now in temporary command of a German officer called Nicolay, and, as I reported, will almost certainly be filled permanently by a German.⁽³⁾ It was understood a German officer should have command of some unit of all arms for purposes of training, and Russian Chargé d'Affaires tells me German Chargé d'Affaires used most uncompromising language as to insistence of his Government on this point if it were raised, but I gather he is not aware of instructions sent to Russian Chargé d'Affaires, who most strongly deprecates moving in the matter, but does not know whether his views will prevail with Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs.

If Russian Government should ask for our support, military attaché's view is that question is not one which is worth raising.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to St. Petersburg (as No. 48).]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 421, No. 470.]

⁽³⁾ [Sir L. Mallet reported the definite appointment of Colonel Nicolay to the command of the third division of the First Army Corps at Scutari. The telegram, (No. 98) of February 12, 1914, D. 9 P.M., R. 10·30 P.M., is not reproduced. (F.O. 6479/88/14/44.) In a private letter to Sir Edward Grey, dated February 18, 1914, Sir G. Buchanan stated that "Sazonow seems to have dropped the question of the Scutari command for the present and will confine himself to trying to induce the Turks to take the first opportunity of transferring the German Colonel to some other post." (Grey MSS., Vol. 35.)]

No. 473.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

St. Petersburg, February 4, 1914.

F.O. 5185/88/14/44.

D. 8·30 P.M.

Tel. (No. 37.)

R. 11·50 P.M.

Minister for Foreign Affairs told me to-day that Germans were again attempting to obtain command of the Scutari division. He attributed this to the weakness of our original attitude in dealing with the question of the German mission, as both Turks and Germans seemed to think that we were indifferent to what they did. Though his Excellency showed considerable exasperation and said that he would have to speak to the Turks, I do not think that he will make a fresh incident out of this question.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Constantinople (as No. 65). A copy was sent to the Director of Military Operations.]

No. 474.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾Private.⁽²⁾

My dear Buchanan,

London, February 11, 1914.

. . . .⁽³⁾ As to the German Military Command in Constantinople: I think that the intrinsic importance of it has been very much exaggerated, and the general impression produced has been that Germany has had a diplomatic set-back, which the German Press has had to explain away as best it could. I do not see why Sazonof should not be content with that.

Yours sincerely,

E. GREY.

⁽¹⁾ [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Prime Minister.]

⁽²⁾ [Grey MSS., Vol. 35.]

⁽³⁾ [The opening paragraphs of this letter are chiefly concerned with the Trans-Persian railway question to which further reference will be made in Vol X (II).]

CHAPTER LXXXVIII.

ARMENIAN REFORMS, 1913-14.

[*ED. NOTE.*—On the subject of this chapter, *cp. G.P., XXXVIII, Chapter 289, pp. 1-189; S Sazonov: Fateful Years, (London, 1928), pp. 136-11; E Ritter von Steinitz, etc.: Rings um Sazonov, (Berlin, 1928); Imperialismus, 1st Ser., Vols. I-III, passim.*]

No. 475.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 3856/178/13/44.
(No. 55.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 23, 1913.

M. Cambon spoke to me to-day of M. Sazonoff's opinion that it was not opportune to raise the Armenian question at the present moment. M. Cambon himself thought this.

I said that I agreed. The first thing which should be done was to bring about peace between the Allies and Turkey.⁽²⁾ When this had been done, we should have to occupy ourselves with putting Turkey on her feet as regards her Asiatic possessions, and there might then be an opportunity of dealing with the question of reforms in Asia Minor.

[I am, &c.]
E. G[REY].

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

⁽²⁾ [This subject is treated in *Gooch & Temperley, Vol. IX (II)*. For references there to the question of Armenian Reforms, *v. p. 435, No. 542, and notes* ⁽²⁾ and ⁽³⁾.]

No. 476.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 4452/253/13/44.
(No. 39.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 27, 1913.

The German Ambassador told me this afternoon that his Government attached great importance to the integrity of Asia Minor, and that they feared, as Russia was massing troops in the Caucasus and was taking a great interest in Armenia, that she might be contemplating some move.⁽²⁾ If Russia was to move into Armenia and France into Syria, Germany could not be indifferent.

I said that, only a few days ago, the Russian Ambassador had asked me to impress upon the Turkish Government that a settlement of the disputed Turco-Persian frontier was what Russia really desired, and that, if Turkey would make this settlement, she would find Russia quite friendly. I did not believe that Russia had any designs upon the integrity of Asia Minor, but there were strategic points on the

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. Siebert-Benckendorff, III, pp. 61-2, where some remarks of Prince Lichnowsky at the Meeting of Ambassadors on January 25, are reported. For the meeting, v. Gooch & Temperley, Vol. IX (II), pp. 447-9, No. 559.*]

Turco-Persian frontier that Turkey had threatened. I would tell the Russian Ambassador what the German Ambassador had said to me; but, if, as I believed, a settlement of the Turco-Persian frontier was the one thing required to produce security, perhaps German influence could be used in Constantinople to impress this on the Turkish Government.

[I am, &c.]
E. G[REY].

No. 477.

Sir E. Goschen to Sir A. Nicolson.⁽¹⁾

Private.⁽²⁾

My dear Nicolson,

Berlin, April 17, 1913.

You will have noticed that now Jagow has spoken to me at least twice very meaningfully on the subject of Asia Minor,⁽³⁾ and has almost dragged the question into the conversation by the heels in order to impress on me the fact that, if it comes to anything like a partition of a portion of Turkey's Asiatic possessions, Germany intends to have her share. And as he also hinted that that is the only direction in which Germany can get her place in the sun, it is to be surmised not only that she would act quickly "if anything like a partition or encroachment" showed signs of being on the tapis, but that she would welcome any signs of a partition rather than not. I have even heard that the question has already been discussed between Germany and Austria, and that they have settled what, *le cas échéant*, each would take. I don't know what Austria would get, but from the way Jagow talks of the enormous German interests in Anatolia, I presume that that rich country is the 'plum' on which Germany has cast her eye.

I fancy from what he has let fall in conversation that he thinks that the opportunity will come after peace is concluded, when he anticipates troubles in Constantinople and subsequent massacres of Armenians by Kurds and the like. Then he thinks that Russia will step in; and then Germany will move.

Of course this is all rather hypothetical but I write it to you, as I think very strongly that the question should not be lost sight of but thoroughly considered (perhaps it has been), because it would never do for us to be taken unawares should a general scramble, such as that of which Jagow talks, take place.

I know that both he and the Chancellor have said that they are anxious to do everything to support Turkey in her work of consolidating her Asiatic possessions &c., but that place in the sun and elbow room after which Germany so hankers is a strong incentive, and I cannot help thinking that the wish may be father to the thought so often expressed by Jagow that circumstances may arise which may cause Germany to 'move.' So that I hope Russia will be careful as to what she does with regard to Armenia, and above all that our position under such circumstances may be also thoroughly considered and our policy decided upon.

Jagow seems to think that there are three things which may cause troubles in Asia leading to intervention and perhaps partition:—

1. Intrigues between the Greeks of the islands adjacent to the Asiatic Coast and Greeks inhabiting the mainland.

⁽¹⁾ [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Prime Minister. The endorsement is initialled by Sir Edward Grey.]

⁽²⁾ [Carnock MSS., Vol. IV of 1913.]

⁽³⁾ [The reference here is to two letters from Sir E. Goschen to Sir A. Nicolson on April 3 and April 12, 1913. They are not reproduced as they add nothing of importance to information given elsewhere. Carnock MSS., Vol. IV of 1913.]

2. The forcing of the lines of Tehataldja by the Bulgarians, their advance on Constantinople and the consequent flight of the Sultan.

8. Troubles in Constantinople after the conclusion of peace leading to uprisings and massacres in Asiatic Turkey.

Yours very sincerely,
W. E. GOSCHEN.

MINUTE.

This is important and to be kept in mind.

E. G.

No. 478.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 19328/173/18/44.

(No. 848.) Confidential.

Constantinople, D. April 24, 1918.

Sir,

R. April 28, 1918.

I have the honour to transmit a despatch no. 16 of April 16th⁽²⁾ from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Adana reporting on the somewhat critical situation in that district. The general tenour of this report is confirmed by a report from the Armenian Catholicos of Sis addressed to the Armenian Patriarch here, a translation of which is herewith enclosed.⁽³⁾

With regard to the statement in the penultimate paragraph of Mr. Matthews's despatch to the effect that a belief is entertained in some local Moslem quarters that Germany would not be displeased if serious disorders occurred in Cilicia, it would appear that some Armenians, remembering the projects for buying up the lands of Armenians massacred in April 1909 in connection with foreign colonization schemes, are also inclined to believe that disorders in Cilicia would not be unwelcome to certain unofficial German agents. The projects of German colonization in districts close to the Bagdad railway are not forgotten and many Armenians believe or fancy that Cilicia may become "the Kiachiaou of Turkey."

The "Osmanischer Lloyd," a new-régime German organ in this capital has lately begun to advocate the introduction of reforms in the Eastern Anatolian provinces inhabited by the Armenians. This coincides with statements recently made by German agents here to Armenians to the effect that Germany will see to it that the reforms guaranteed in 1878 by the Treaty of Berlin and the Cyprus Convention are now carried out.⁽³⁾ As the advocacy of these reforms by Germany is potentially an anti-Russian move and as the Armenians only met with massacre and disaster from the old antagonism in the matter between England and Russia, Armenians are suspicious of these German advances.

With reference to the recent reported application of the present Turkish Cabinet to His Majesty's Government for the loan of British administrative inspectors &c. for the Asia Minor provinces,⁽⁴⁾ it is stated here that this action has been prompted or approved by Germany. In the autumn of 1912, when the cabinet of Ghazi Muktar Pasha had made similar proposals for Macedonia, Gabriel Effendi, the Minister for Foreign Affairs stated that a foreign ambassador (presumably the Austrian) asked him rather pertinently whether "a monopoly was to be given to England" in the matter.

(1) [A copy of this despatch was sent to the Director of Military Operations.]

(2) [Not reproduced.]

(3) [v. Hertslet: *Map of Europe by Treaty*, Vol. IV, pp. 2796-8 (Treaty of Berlin, Articles LXI-II); p. 2723 (Cyprus Convention, Article I).]

(4) [*cp. infra*, pp. 481-2, No. 541, *min.*, where a summary is given of these applications.]

It is not impossible that a similar scheme would be similarly looked upon by Russia in as far as the Eastern Anatolian provinces are concerned, while France might also have the same feelings about Syria. Like objections would not seem to apply to Western Asia Minor and Mesopotamia.

It is however a moot point whether, like in Persia, the process of administrative disintegration in the outlying non-Turkish provinces has not gone too far for any exotic remedy of this kind to be any longer availing, and it is perhaps only after the definite conclusion of peace with the Balkan allies that it will be possible to form a more definite opinion on the subject.

I have, &c.

GERARD LOWTHER.

No. 479.

Communication from Tewfik Pasha.

F.O. 19208/19208/13/44.

No. 281/12.

Deux annexes.

Ottoman Embassy, London, D. April 24, 1913.

R. April 26, 1913.

L'Ambassadeur de Turquie présente ses compliments à Sir E. Grey et a l'honneur de Lui exposer ce qui suit : Comme Son Excellence ne l'ignore pas, le Gouvernement Impérial ardemment désireux d'introduire dans tout l'Empire des réformes tendant à relever le niveau moral et matériel de ses nationaux sans distinction de race ou de religion, avait depuis longtemps déjà mis à l'étude un projet de Loi arrêtant les dispositions qu'il conviendrait de prendre pour atteindre ce but. C'est guidé par cet esprit qu'il avait en son temps approché le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique avec la prière de vouloir bien l'aider dans l'accomplissement de cette tâche en lui prêtant le concours de spécialistes Anglais, et avait obtenu Son consentement en principe.

Les événements de ces temps derniers avaient malheureusement retardé l'application des mesures et dispositions jugées les plus appropriées à la réalisation des réformes nécessaires.

Une période de calme et de paix s'annonçant très prochainement, le Gouvernement Impérial pénétré de l'utilité qu'il y aurait d'aviser le plus tôt possible à la mise en vigueur des mesures et dispositions dont il s'agit, vient réitérer au Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique la prière de lui prêter le concours promis.

La nouvelle Loi sur les Villayets élaborée dans cette intention et sanctionnée par l'Empereur, définit les devoirs et attributions des autorités et fonctionnaires appelés à l'exécuter et leur accorde une large liberté d'action et d'initiative. Mais afin d'assurer son application d'une façon effective et rationnelle, le Gouvernement Impérial a jugé utile d'établir dans l'Empire des "secteurs" dans lesquels seront compris, suivant les besoins et les convenances, trois ou quatre Villayets. A la tête de chacun de ces Secteurs sera placé un Inspecteur-Général ainsi qu'un nombre adéquat d'inspecteurs ayant pour mission de veiller à l'application intégrale des dispositions de la nouvelle Loi.

En vue d'éviter toute perte de temps il a été en même temps décidé de procéder avant tout et aussi promptement que possible à la mise en vigueur de cette loi dans le Secteur de l'Anatolie Orientale comprenant les Villayets de Van, Bitlis, Mamouret-ul-Aziz et Diarbékir, et dans celui de l'Anatolie Septentrionale englobant les Villayets d'Erzeroum, Sivas et Trébizonde.

Ces réformes seront étendues ensuite au fur et à mesure, dans les autres points de l'Empire.

Une des réformes qui s'impose avec le plus d'urgence étant l'organisation d'une Gendarmerie, le Gouvernement Impérial est désireux d'engager pour chaque Corps de gendarmerie un Commandant Anglais.

A chacun des Inspecteurs Généraux à désigner pour les deux susdits Secteurs, seront adjoints aussi un inspecteur de gendarmerie, un inspecteur de justice, et un inspecteur d'agriculture, forêts et travaux publics. Ces inspecteurs seront engagés parmi des spécialistes anglais recommandés par le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique. Le Gouvernement Impérial désignera en outre à l'Administration centrale du Ministère de l'Intérieur deux personnalités anglaises, l'une en qualité de Conseiller et l'autre d'Inspecteur-Général.

En portant ce qui précède à la connaissance de Sir E. Grey, Tewfik Pacha a l'honneur d'ajouter que son Gouvernement laisse au Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique le soin de fixer le montant des traitements à allouer à chacun de ces fonctionnaires lorsqu'il Lui plaira de lui faire connaître les noms et qualités des personnalités qu'Il jugera aptes à remplir avantageusement les fonctions qui devront leur être respectivement attribuées.

Ainsi que Son Excellence voudra bien le constater, le Gouvernement Impérial, en prenant les dispositions susvisées, ne fait d'ailleurs que se conformer à l'esprit des dispositions de la Convention de Chypre.⁽¹⁾

Londres, le 24 Avril 1913.

Enclosure 1-in No. 479.

Attributions des fonctionnaires Anglais engagés par le Gouvernement Impérial.

Annexe 1.

Ces attributions s'étendront au domaine de l'application pratique et pour stimuler leur zèle le Gouvernement Impérial ne manquera pas de leur laisser de larges attributions et le droit d'initiative.

Les Officiers de Gendarmerie à désigner seront chargés du commandement effectif des corps de gendarmerie; il serait par conséquent avantageux que ces Officiers soient choisis de préférence parmi des personnalités connaissant les habitudes et les besoins de l'Orient.

Les Inspecteurs de Justice, Gendarmerie, Travaux publics et Agriculture qui seront désignés pour chacune des circonscriptions administratives de l'Est et du Nord de l'Anatolie, seront placés sous les ordres d'un Inspecteur Général pour chacune de ces circonscriptions et auront pour mission l'inspection des services ci-haut mentionnés. Ils rapporteront à leur Inspecteur-Général respectif les améliorations qu'ils jugeront nécessaires dans les services défectueux.

Un Inspecteur-General pour l'administration centrale du Ministère de l'Intérieur sera l'autorité supérieure de laquelle dépendront tous les inspecteurs civils des provinces. Cet Inspecteur-Général aura la mission de former les cadres et de régler les travaux de ces inspecteurs. Il sera également chargé d'étudier et d'analyser les rapports qui parviendront des provinces et de soumettre au Ministre le résultat de son analyse ainsi que ses observations personnelles. Il fera aussi des tournées d'inspection dans les provinces toutes les fois que le Ministre le jugera nécessaire, en vue d'inspecter personnellement les services civils et soumettre au Ministre un rapport renfermant ses observations.

Le Conseiller Anglais au Ministère de l'Intérieur sera également chargé de prêter sa collaboration au Ministre dans l'élaboration des projets de Loi et la réorganisation des services administratifs généraux.

⁽¹⁾ [cp. especially Sir H. Layard's despatch (No. 1319), D. October 24, 1878, R. November 1, 1878, and *encl.* F.O. 78/2803.]

Enclosure 2 in No. 479.

Nombre et attributions des fonctionnaires Anglais à engager.

Annexe 2.

- 1°. Un Conseiller pour le Ministère de l'Intérieur.
- 2°. Un Inspecteur-Général pour le Ministère de l'Intérieur.
- 3°. Deux Inspecteurs de Gendarmerie pour dépendre chacun des deux Inspecteurs-Généraux Ottomans placés chacun à la tête des deux Secteurs de l'Anatolie.
- 4°. Deux Inspecteurs de justice.
- 5°. Deux Inspecteurs d'agriculture et forêts.
- 6°. Deux Inspecteurs de travaux publics.
- 7°. Sept Officiers de Gendarmerie Anglais pour commander les sept Corps de gendarmerie de chacun des Villayets qui composent les deux Secteurs déjà mentionnés.

MINUTES.

This is a very important proposal politically. We want Turkey to remain a Power in Asia and we want reforms for the Armenians. Unless reforms are introduced, it is certain that Turkish Power will decline and that there will be massacres and troubles of all kinds in these Provinces. I do not see how we can refuse compliance. We are the only people who could undertake the duty and carry it through successfully and the only Power who would be allowed by other Powers to undertake it, as it is recognized that we have no territorial and political ambitions in these Provinces. This proposal offers us the only opportunity which we have ever had of doing anything for the Armenians and if we shirk it, and allow others to take our place, our influence and prestige must decline—and we shall be much criticized here.

The main part of the proposal is that relating to the Gendarmerie. If we agree to lending an adviser for the interior, and an Inspector Gen[era]l we must also agree to lending Gendarmerie Inspectors and officers, because there is no knowing for what we might not be made responsible if the Gendarmerie officers were foreigners. The Inspectors of Justice the Inspectors of Agriculture and Forests and the Inspectors of Public Works seem at first sight to be of secondary importance and, if, as I hope is not the case there is any hesitation in giving full assistance to the Turks and complying in full with their request, we might, at any rate accept the Gendarmerie proposals at once.

We shall then see how the land lies.

L. M.

On reading these papers I find that the project is not so extensive as I had believed. The officials which are required are to work in the Armenian vilayets—and not all over Asia Minor. The only foreign Power which is the most directly interested is Russia—and I do not think, so far as the local officials are concerned, that the scheme would clash with German or French interests. There are, however, the two superior officials at the Ministry of the Interior—and here jealousies and misunderstandings among other Powers may possibly arise. It would certainly be unfortunate if we declined to entertain in any case some portions of the Turkish proposals. I sh[oul]d be inclined to tell Tewfik P[ash]a that we are desirous of assisting the Turkish Gov[ernmen]t as far as we can in carrying out their excellent intentions—and that we sh[oul]d be ready to facilitate their task as far as possible. At the same time we do not wish to lead the Turkish Gov[ernmen]t into any difficulties with foreign Gov[ernmen]ts and the engagement of subjects of one nationality in so many branches of the admin[istration] might cause the Turkish Gov[ernmen]t embarrassments. We think that an Inspector Gen[era]l at the Min[istry] of the Interior who would act as the channel between the local Gendarmerie Inspectors and the Central Gov[ernmen]t w[oul]d be sufficient without having also a Conseiller—that we w[oul]d endeavour to find the Gendarmerie inspectors among our people—but that we w[oul]d like to be authorized to previously confer with the Russian Gov[ernmen]t whose territories are neighbouring on the secteurs mentioned so that they sh[oul]d be under no misapprehensions &c. but that for Justice we w[oul]d recommend French as I believe the Ottoman code is largely based on the Napoleon code—and for Forests and Public Works we w[oul]d suggest their applying either to Russia or Germany or to both.

A. N.
E. G.

I venture to think that it might be more prudent to say nothing about giving the other Inspectorates to foreigners or that we should reserve the Inspector of Public Works for

an Englishman as he will be the authority whom the Turks will consult about all concessions in future—oil and other.

L. M.

We might before replying to Tewfik P[ash]a telegraph to Sir G. Lowther summarising our proposed reply and asking for his observations—and draw attention to point raised by Sir L. Mallet as to Public Works.

A. N.

Yes do this⁽²⁾: and if Sir L. Mallet is not going away I should like to talk the matter over with him and Sir A. Nicolson next week.

E. G.
3.5.13

(²) [r. immediately succeeding document]

No. 480.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 19208/19208/13/44.

Tel. (No. 207.)

Foreign Office, May 6, 1913, 4.45 P.M.

Turkish Gov[ernmen]t have applied to us through Turkish Ambassador here for loan of officials under new law on Vilayets which they propose to enforce at once in Eastern Anatolian secteur (comprising vilayets of Van, Bitlis, Mamuret-et-Aziz and Diarbekir) and Northern Anatolian secteur (comprising vilayets of Erzeroum, Sivas and Trebizond).

They ask for Inspectors of gendarmerie, agriculture and public works for each of these secteurs, for seven gendarmerie officers (one for each vilayet) and for an Adviser and an Inspector-General of the Ministry of the Interior.⁽²⁾

I propose to reply that, while we are desirous of assisting the Turkish Gov[ernmen]t as far as we can in carrying out their intentions of introducing reforms, we do not wish to lead them into difficulties with foreign Gov[ernmen]ts which engagement of subjects of one Power in so many branches of administration might possibly do. We could not well avoid mentioning the matter to the Russian Gov[ernmen]t whose territory borders on secteurs mentioned, in order that they may be under no misapprehension as to our attitude.

I sh[oul]d doubt if it w[oul]d be advisable to have both a British Adviser and a British Inspector Gen[era]l at the Ministry of the Interior, and I sh[oul]d be inclined to eliminate the former altogether and be content with a British Inspector Gen[era]l and also to have British officers for the gendarmerie. As to Justice and Forestry former might go to French and latter to German or Russian and as to Public Works if very desirable I w[oul]d consent to British officials—though perhaps it w[oul]d be wiser to give that Dep[artmen]t to another nationality. Before saying anything to Turkish Amb[assado]r I sh[oul]d be glad to have your observations.

(1) [A copy of this telegram was sent to the Director of Military Operations.]

(2) [v immediately preceding document, and *encls*]

No. 481.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Constantinople, May 9, 1913.

D. 1.15 P.M.

R. 5 P.M.

F.O. 21451/19208/13/44.

Tel. (No. 225.)

Your telegram No. 207 of 6th May.⁽²⁾

New law on vilayets still lacks the sanction of the Chamber and is already encountering opposition in the non-Turkish vilayets, e.g., Basra and Syria, while general internal situation is still far from stable. It would seem essential first to ascertain from the Ottoman Ambassador precise nature of attributions, powers, and relations to the local authorities of the British inspectors asked for, and especially in the case of adviser and Inspector-General at the Ministry of the Interior.

The position of a foreign adviser at the Ministry of the Interior would be a very difficult and delicate one, especially in the matter of appointment and revocation of officials in a country like Turkey, where there are such a multitude of candidates for posts, also in the case of "election" rigged by the local provincial authorities, as in those of the spring of 1912.

As to justice, there are negotiations for the appointment of a Frenchman as adviser or Inspector-General, and he might prefer to have Frenchmen as provincial subordinates. A German would seem best for Forestry and Agriculture.

Ministry of Public Works is French in colouring, as the officials speak French or have been trained in France, so that French interests are apt to receive preferential consideration, possibly to the disadvantage of Turkey.

Gendarmerie might well be in British hands, but it can hardly be expected that one officer in each vilayet will secure anything like efficiency.

MINUTES.

We said we eliminated altogether the *adviser* at the Mini[stry] of Interior. We could reply to Tewfik P[ash]a in general and friendly terms on the lines of previous minutes and this tel[egram] and ask if his Gov[ernmen]t w[oul]d allow us to confer with Russian Gov[ernmen]t for the reasons stated in 19208.⁽²⁾

A. N.

I should say nothing about the Russian Gov[ernmen]t yet to Tewfik. It will put the Turks off altogether. So send a reply in general and friendly terms simply.⁽³⁾

E. G.

⁽¹⁾ [A copy of this telegram was sent to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

⁽³⁾ [v. *infra*, pp. 432-3, No. 483.]

No. 482.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 22523/19208/13/44.

(No. 152.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, May 15, 1913.

The Turkish Ambassador gave to me and Sir A. Nicolson to-day the following additional "aide-mémoire" as to British officials for Asia Minor.

(See paper herewith.)

We said that we were very willing to give any assistance that we could to Turkey; but, as some of the districts in question were actually on the Russian frontier, we

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

thought it well to disarm Russian suspicion by telling the Russian Government what we were doing. It would also be necessary for Turkey to humour the suspicion and jealousy that might be aroused amongst other Powers who had interests in Asia Minor.

The Ambassador replied that this administration under foreign Officers would be a new creation.

Sir Arthur Nicolson and I observed that, admitting that this was so, it was quite likely that France and Germany would claim to have some share in it; and we did not wish, while giving help to Turkey, to raise difficulties for her with other Powers.

The Ambassador seemed quite alive to this point, and with regard to Russia acquiesced without demur in the opinion that we should give her information.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

Enclosure in No. 482.

Communication from Tewfik Pasha.

No. 360/23.

Ottoman Embassy, London, May 15, 1913.

L'Ambassadeur de Turquie présente ses compliments à Sir E. Grey et pour faire suite à la Note avec deux annexes, qu'il a eu l'honneur d'adresser à Son Excellence en date du 24 Avril dernier, sub No. 281/12,⁽²⁾ s'empresse d'ajouter que son Gouvernement, toujours confiant dans les sentiments d'amitié du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique pour l'aider à réaliser le programme de réformes administratives dans toutes les provinces de l'Empire, a décidé de créer un troisième Secteur pour la circonscription du Sud comprenant le Vilayet de Damas.⁽³⁾

Ce troisième Secteur devant recevoir la même organisation que les circonscriptions administratives du Nord et de l'Est de l'Anatolie, Tewfik Pacha vient prier Son Excellence Sir E. Grey de bien vouloir ajouter à la liste précédemment renmise, la liste ci-incluse qui comprend le nombre et la qualité des fonctionnaires Anglais dont le champ d'activité devra s'étendre dans la circonscription du Sud.

Londres le 15 Mai 1913.

Annexe au No. 360/23.

Nombre et Qualité des Fonctionnaires Anglais à engager pour la Circonscription du Sud.

- 1°. Un Inspecteur Général.
- 2°. Trois Officiers chargés du commandement de régiments de Gendarmerie.
- 3°. Un Inspecteur de Gendarmerie.
- 4°. Un Inspecteur de Justice.
- 5°. Un Inspecteur des Travaux Publics.
- 6°. Un Inspecteur pour l'Agriculture et les Forêts.

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 427-9, No. 479, and encls.]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. infra*, p. 435, No. 487.]

No. 483.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.

F.O. 19208/19208/13/44.

(No. 150.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, May 19, 1913.

With ref[erence] to my tel[egram] No. 207 of the 6th⁽¹⁾ and Y[our] E[xcellency's] tel[egram] No. 225 of the 9th inst[ant],⁽²⁾ I tr[ansmit] to Y[our]

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 430, No. 480.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 431, No. 481.]

E[xcellency] herewith copies of notes from the Turkish Amb[assado]r at this Court conveying a request from his Gov[ernmen]t for the loan of the services of British officials to assist in the reorganisation of the administration, chiefly in Northern and Eastern Anatolia.⁽³⁾

Tewfik Pasha called at this Office on the 13th inst[ant] and referred to this question.

(Sir A. N[icolson], who received H[is] H[ighness], told him that the question was being considered by the Dep[artmen]ts interested, and that it appeared to H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] that, as some of the Vilayets concerned bordered on the Russian frontier, it would be well to inform the Russian Gov[ernmen]t of the request which had been made:

Tewfik Pasha said that there would be no objection to this but that his Gov[ernmen]t did not wish Russia to participate.

Sir A. N[icolson] intimated that, in order not to create embarrassments with other Powers, it seemed to H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] that the proposal of an Adviser at the Ministry of the Interior had better be dropped. An Inspector General was a different matter.

Tewfik Pasha raised no objection, and Sir A. N[icolson] promised that H[is] H[ighness] would receive a reply shortly as to the request he had made.⁽⁴⁾

Sir A. Nicolson informed the Russian Chargé d'Affaires on the 15th inst[ant] of this request.⁽⁵⁾

[I am, &c.
E. GREY.]

⁽³⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 427-9, No. 479, and *encls.*]

⁽⁴⁾ [The passage printed in round brackets is taken from Sir A. Nicolson's own record of his conversation with Tewfik Pasha. It is minuted by Sir Edward Grey: "This has prepared the way very well for our reply. E. G."]

⁽⁵⁾ [*cp. D.D.F.*, 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VI, p. 653, No. 563.]

No. 484.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

St. Petersburg, May 21, 1913.

F.O. 28357/19208/13/44.

Tel. (No. 195.)

D. 8-15 P.M.

R. 10 P.M.

Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs alluded to-day to question of organisation of gendarmerie in Asiatic provinces of Turkey by British officers.⁽²⁾ He asked me to impress on you that he attaches great importance to gendarmerie question not being separated from general question of reforms in Asiatic Turkey and to whole subject being treated by three Ambassadors at Constantinople.

⁽¹⁾ [A copy of this telegram was sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. infra*, pp. 434-5, Nos. 486-7.]

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 23708/19208/13/44.

(No. 326.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, May 21, 1913.

Sir Arthur Nicolson, who was with me, explained to the French and Russian Ambassadors to-day⁽²⁾ the proposal that the Turkish Ambassador had made about the Gendarmerie in Asia Minor.⁽³⁾ He pointed out that the Russian Government wished the matter held in suspense until we had come to an arrangement about reforms in Asia Minor. He quite agreed that these should be discussed, that we should come to an agreement with France and Russia, and that we should then discuss the matter with the other Powers. Reforms for Armenia were urgent. But, meanwhile, it would never do to discourage the Turks in their wish to make improvements, and any arrangements that they made about the Gendarmerie now would be helpful to any scheme of reform. As a matter of fact, the Turks had asked for British officials for all sorts of things; we proposed to lend officials only for the Gendarmerie in the Armenian Vilayets; and to refuse to do even this would be most discouraging.

The French Ambassador entirely agreed that the Turks must not be discouraged, and that the request for Gendarmerie was one that we could not refuse.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch was repeated to St. Petersburg (No. 202).]

⁽²⁾ [An interview of this date was reported by Count Benckendorff, but the record deals with the Bagdad Railway question. *cp. Siebert*, pp. 663-4; *Siebert-Benckendorff*, III, pp. 194-5. The British record on this subject will be printed in *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. X (II). M. Paul Cambon's account is in *D.D.F.*, 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VI, pp. 636-9, No. 592. A further discussion on the same day was reported by M. Paul Cambon, but in this case the record deals with the Albanian frontier and the Aegean Islands. *cp. ibid.*, pp. 676-8, No. 583. The British record is given in *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II), p. 806, No. 988.]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp. 427-9, No. 479, and *encls.*; pp. 431-2, No. 482, and *encl.*]

No. 486.

Communication from Count Benckendorff.

F.O. 23351/19208/13/44.

Russian Embassy, London, May 21, 1913.

Monsieur Sazonoff est très reconnaissant de l'obligeante information au sujet de la demande du Gouv[ernemen]t Ottoman que des officiers anglais soient désignés en qualité d'instructeurs de la Gendarmerie dans les Vilayets asiatiques de l'Empire.

Il pense toutefois que cette question devrait être comprise dans l'ensemble du projet de réformes à introduire en Asie Mineure.

Le Gouv[ernemen]t Impérial ne pouvant se désintéresser de tout ce qui se rapporte aux régions limitrophes de l'Empire,—notamment de l'Arménie,—s'est fait un devoir d'attirer, il y a quelque temps déjà, l'attention des Gouvernements britannique et français sur la nécessité de se concerter à cet effet.

Le droit de participation de la Russie, de l'Angleterre et de la France dans la résolution de cette question se trouve d'ailleurs confirmé par le précédent de 1895,—lorsque la Porte a notifié son projet de réformes précisément aux Gouvernements de ces trois Puissances.

Le moment actuel semble indiqué pour y procéder et le Gouv[ernemen]t Impérial pense que les Ambassadeurs de Russie, Angleterre et France à Constantinople pourraient être chargés d'élaborer les mesures concrètes des projets de réformes en question.⁽¹⁾

⁽¹⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 433, No. 484; *infra*, p. 435, No. 488.]

M[onsieu]r Sazonoff serait reconnaissant de connaître la manière de voir du Cab[inet] de Londres (Paris) à ce sujet.⁽²⁾

⁽²⁾ [*cp. D.D.F.*, 3^{me} Ser., Vol VI, p. 653, No 568. *cp. also* M. Delcassé's comment, *ibid.*, p. 674, No. 581.]

No. 487.

Communication from Tewfik Pasha.⁽¹⁾

Aide-Mémoire.

Ottoman Embassy, London, D. May 21, 1913.

F.O. 28484/19208/13/41.

R. May 22, 1913.

Dans la note du 15 Mai 1913 No. 360/23,⁽²⁾ il a été dit par suite d'une erreur dans le déchiffrement du télégramme ministériel que le Troisième Secteur englobait également le Vilayet de Damas. De la correspondance subséquente il appert que ce Troisième Secteur comprend seulement les Vilayets de Smyrne, Brousse et Constantinople.

Londres le 21 Mai 1913.

MINUTES.

This seems to me rather to change the situation.

We intended to refuse to provide officers for the third secteur because it included the vilayet of Damascus where we might annoy the French, and our answer to the Turkish Ambassador was modified accordingly.

In the three vilayets now mentioned there are no special foreign interests with which we could clash as those of Germany lie further south and east.

We have moreover Gendarmerie officers at Smyrna already.

Might we not explain this to M. Cambon and Count Benckendorff and restore our answer to Tewfik Pasha to its original form?

H. N.

May 22, 1913.

This certainly alters the situation. There do not seem to be any reasonable objections to our giving officers for these vilayets.

R. P. M.

I think we should limit ourselves to the 6 or 7 Armenian vilayets. In the Broussa and Constantinople Vilayets there are very many foreign interests.

A. N.

⁽¹⁾ [A copy of this communication was sent to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 431-2, No. 482, and *encl.*]

No. 488.

Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 23689/19208/13/44.

(No. 258.) Confidential.

Sir:—

Paris, D. May 22, 1913.

R. May 24, 1913.

M. Pichon informed me in conversation this evening that Monsieur Sazonov proposes that the question of the reforms to be introduced in Asia Minor shall be discussed with the Porte by the Russian, French and British Governments.

I have, &c.

FRANCIS BERTIE.

⁽¹⁾ [A copy of this despatch was sent to the Director of Military Operations.]

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. O'Beirne.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 28941/19208/18/44.

Tel. (No. 422.)

Foreign Office, May 23, 1913, 5.20 P.M.

Your tel[egram] No. 195.⁽²⁾

The Turkish Gov[ernmen]t requested us to lend British officials for several departments, gendarmerie, justice, public works, agriculture &c., but we considered it undesirable that officials of one nationality should be entrusted with so many different departments, as such an arrangement might give rise to misunderstandings and might cause embarrassment to the Turkish Gov[ernmen]t. On the other hand to refuse to afford any assistance at all would have greatly discouraged the Turkish Gov[ernmen]t and would in all probability merely have caused them to address themselves elsewhere. We therefore have told Turkish Ambassador here that we are ready to see if a few officers can be found to undertake the duty of organising gendarmerie in the vilayets inhabited by Armenians, but that we would wish to limit our assistance to that alone. I quite agree with M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] that a scheme of reforms should be drawn up for the Asiatic provinces of Turkey and I would be happy to exchange views with him on the subject, but I think such exchange should take place here rather than at Constantinople. At the same time any scheme of reforms must be eventually the work of all the Powers, and could not well be put forward by three of them alone. It will take some little time to find the suitable officers for the gendarmerie, and to settle details as to contract, attributions &c. And the loan of a few officers will not in any way affect the general question of reforms, in which I wish to act entirely in accord with M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs].

(1) [This telegram was repeated to Paris (as No. 212); to Constantinople (as No. 221). A copy was sent to the Director of Military Operations.]

(2) [*v. supra*, p. 433, No. 484.]

Communication from Tewfik Pasha.

F.O. 23640/19208/18/44.

Ottoman Embassy, London, D. May 23, 1913.

No. 388/25.

R. May 24, 1913.

Tewfik Pacha présente ses compliments à Sir E. Grey, et pour faire suite aux Notes qu'il a eu l'honneur d'adresser à Son Excellence au sujet de l'engagement de Fonctionnaires Anglais que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique veut bien prêter au Gouvernement Impérial Ottoman pour la réorganisation administrative de la Turquie, s'empresse de définir les attributions des Inspecteurs-Généraux des différentes circonscriptions de l'Empire.

Ces Inspecteurs-Généraux auront à élaborer tous les règlements et Lois pour la circonscription dont ils ont l'inspection; à assurer particulièrement la stricte application de la Loi sur l'administration générale du Villayet; à surveiller et contrôler les services des fonctionnaires et à adopter, après un échange de vues et une correspondance avec les Gouverneurs-Généraux et les Commandants militaires des provinces, les mesures nécessaires pour assurer l'ordre et la tranquillité. Ils seront en même temps munis de larges pouvoirs pour l'adoption de mesures propre à favoriser le progrès de l'instruction publique et de l'agriculture en vue de développer la prospérité économique du pays.

Londres, le 23 mai, 1913.

MINUTES.

As we are only undertaking to provide the Inspector-General at the Ministry of the Interior and the Inspectors and Officers of Gendarmerie much of this letter is beside the point.

Still, we had better now send copy of it and of all the previous correspondence to the India and War Offices and ask them to suggest candidates for the posts for which officials are required and to furnish their observations as to salary and conditions of service, which are left to our discretion.

(The officials here referred to are, I imagine, the *Ottoman* Inspectors General mentioned in 19208.(1))

H. N.

May 24, 1913.

R. P. M.

Are we going to ignore M. Sazonov's objections?

L. M.

See tel[egram] from Mr O'Beirne rec[eive]d to-day(2) since the above minute was written.

R. P. M.

May 27, 1913

(1) [v. *supra*, pp. 427-9, No. 479, and *encls.*]

(2) [v. *infra*, p. 438, No. 492.]

No. 491.

Sir Edward Grey to Tewfik Pasha.(1)

F.O. 21451/19208/13/44.

Foreign Office, May 24, 1913.

His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Turkish Ambassador and has the honour to acknowledge the receipt of His Highness's communications of the 24th ultimo(2) and 15th instant(3) conveying a request from the Ottoman Government for the services of certain British officials to assist in the introduction of reforms into the administration of Eastern and Northern Anatolia.

Sir Edward Grey hastens to assure Tewfik Pasha of the earnest desire of His Majesty's Government to assist, so far as lies in their power, the Ottoman Government in the realisation of these excellent intentions and to do all that is possible to facilitate the task.

His Majesty's Government are however loth to lead the Ottoman Government to take any step which might involve them in difficulties with other Governments and fear that the engagement of subjects of a single Power to fill posts in so many branches of the administration might have the effect of causing to the Turkish Empire embarrassments of this nature. They are further of opinion that, in view of the fact that the employment of such officials must at first be in the nature of an experiment, it would be safer, in the first instance, to limit it to a comparatively small area, such, for example, as the seven vilayets forming the proposed northern and eastern secteurs where, on account of the local ethnographical conditions, reforms are more urgently needed than in the rest of the Empire.

His Majesty's Government would therefore consider it advisable to limit their assistance to the provision of inspectors and officers of gendarmerie in the two secteurs mentioned in Tewfik Pasha's earlier note.

His Majesty's Government think that an Inspector-General, attached to the Ministry of the Interior, who would serve as a channel of communication between the

(1) [This note was repeated to Constantinople in Sir Edward Grey's despatch (No. 160) of May 24, 1913. (F.O. 21451/19208/13/44.)]

(2) [v. *supra*, pp. 427-9, No. 479, and *encls.*]

(3) [v. *supra*, pp. 431-2, No. 482, and *encl.*]

Central Government and the local Inspectors of Gendarmerie might prove sufficient without the appointment, in addition, of an Adviser to the same Ministry.

His Majesty's Government would be happy to consider the question of recommending British Officials to fill the posts of Inspector-General at the Ministry of the Interior, of Inspectors of Gendarmerie, and of Officers of Gendarmerie.⁽¹⁾

Foreign Office, 24 May, 1913.

(4) [The final paragraph was originally drafted as follows: "... Officers of Gendarmerie, though with regard to these last they would venture to point out that a single officer in each vilayet could hardly be expected to secure the efficiency of the service." According to a marginal note by Sir A. Nicolson, "I think we had better omit this. A. N.," this sentence was not included in the communication to Tewfik Pasha.]

No. 492.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 24204/19208/13/44.

St. Petersburg, D. May 26, 1913, 10 P.M.

Tel. (No. 197.)

R. May 27, 1913, 8 A.M.

Reforms in Asiatic Turkey.

I read to the M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] to-day your telegram No. 422 of May 23.⁽²⁾ He said that he had already telegraphed to the Russian Ambassador in London⁽³⁾ reasons which made it entirely impossible for him to modify his objections to the proposed employment of British officers in the reorganisation of the gendarmerie in the Armenian vilayets.⁽⁴⁾

Speaking of the special position occupied by Russia in those districts he stated that some time ago representatives of Armenians had approached the Russian Government with a request for the annexation of Turkish Armenia to Russia. He had replied that there could be no question of annexation but that Russia would see that effective reforms were carried out. Russia was therefore under peculiar obligations to the Armenians and she could not play second violin in this matter.

I asked what H[is] E[xc]ellency proposed to do if Turkey refused to employ Russian officers. He replied that there need not be only Russian officers. He did not wish to have Germans in those regions but there might be some French and British officers. However he had not thought out this point and did not wish to pronounce upon it. If Turkey altogether refused to employ foreign officers he would intimate to her that the result would certainly be disorders and massacres of Armenians in which case Russia would intervene. He added that Russia would certainly not repeat former mistake of remaining passive in the presence of Armenian massacres and said that Armenians could not continue to live under fear of such occurrences.

M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] was equally decided about necessity for general question of reforms being discussed in Constantinople. He said that Ambassadors were in touch with the Armenians which was indispensable and that they had information as to the local conditions which was not available in London.⁽⁵⁾

MINUTES.

I had not realised that M. Sazonow's attitude on this question was as uncompromising as the passage marked shows it to be.

(1) [Copies of this telegram were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

(2) [*v. supra*, p. 436, No. 489.]

(3) [*v. immediately succeeding document.*]

(4) [*cp. M. Paul Cambon's report of his discussions with Count Benckendorff on this subject. D.D.F., 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VI, pp. 694-7, No. 599.*]

(5) [For Sir Edward Grey's reply to this telegram, *v. infra*, p. 442, No. 495. A more detailed account was sent by Mr. O'Beirne in his despatch (No. 172), D. May 27, R. June 2, 1913. *v. infra*, pp. 441-2, No. 494.]

Unfortunately we have already given our word to the Turks that we will lend officers for the gendarmerie and I do not see how we can withdraw it

Nor do I see why the Turks should not select officers from the subjects of any Power they please. I feel sure that they will refuse to employ any Russians.

Can we not make another attempt to move M. Sazonow by pointing out that, if we break our word to the Turks they will turn to Germany and nobody has the right to prevent them. British officers would do nothing to which Russia could possibly object and their presence could not in any way interfere with Russia's special interests.

As for general reforms surely all the Powers must participate in the discussion.

H. N.

May 27, 1913.

This is certainly very unexpected and unjustifiable. Can Count Benckendorff be urged to try and move M. Sazonow as suggested above?

R. P. M.

I think that we must not give way about this and that it is most unreasonable of M. Sazonow to expect it.

L. M.

Count Benckendorff has done all in his power to explain matters fully to M. Sazonow but tells me that he finds the latter very stiff and agitated over this question. He left with me to-day (May 27) the annexed telegram which he had received from M. Sazonow⁽⁶⁾ I also think that the attitude of the latter is unreasonable but I understand that the Armenians are bringing pressure on him and he wants to show that Russia will not play second violin in the question. We should keep in view the necessity of not bringing Turkey into difficulties with Russia and giving the latter an excuse to take sudden and drastic action—and so I would propose to temporise over the question. The line of action I would suggest is the following:—

Q[uer]y: tel[egraph] to Mr. O'Beirne.

Your tel[egram] No. 197.

I am quite ready to withdraw my suggestion as to exchange of views here and agree that the question of reforms in the Armenian vilayets should be discussed between the 3 Ambassadors at Constantinople as I understand was done in 1895 (see Minute on 23941(?)), and that they should later after having consulted the Ottoman Gov[ernmen]t communicate their D[ra]ft project to the other Powers. It is most essential that no friction or danger of friction should arise between Russia and Turkey, and I am sure that M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] will agree and cooperate with H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] in averting any risk of that nature. I should be ready if M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] so desires it to mention confidentially to the Turkish Amba[ssado]r here the anxiety felt by the Russian Gov[ernmen]t as to the condition of affairs in the vilayets limitrophe to Russia in Asia and the necessity of the Turkish Gov[ernmen]t giving no cause to Russia having to take steps in view of any possible disorders. As to the loan of 6 or 7 British officers to organize a gendarmerie I am unable to see how such a modest measure can possibly affect the position of Russia or run counter to the very natural desire she has to preserve her prestige in districts neighbouring on her frontier. And it would not be possible for me to withdraw from the engagement which I have given to the Turkish Gov[ernmen]t through their Amba[ssado]r here. Such a course on my part would undoubtedly lead to misunderstanding on the part of the Turkish Gov[ernmen]t and very possibly complicate and delay the whole question of reforms which I in conjunction with the M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] am most desirous should be introduced with the least possible delay. I would nevertheless be disposed, if M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] still insists, to defer the actual engagement of the officers until a project of reforms was prepared and I would explain to the Turkish Gov[ernmen]t that as the gendarmerie formed part of a general scheme it would be well that the ground work at any rate of such scheme should be laid down before the officers actually entered upon their duties. I trust the M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] will appreciate the length to which I am prepared to go to meet his wishes—and on hearing from him I will send the necessary instructions to H[is] M[ajesty's] Ambassador at Constantinople to enter into immediate consultation with his French and Russian colleagues as to a project of reforms to be prepared with the least possible delay.

A. N.

I will discuss this with Sir A. Nicolson and Sir L. Mallet to-morrow.⁽⁸⁾

E. G.

27.5.13.

⁽⁶⁾ [v. immediately succeeding document.]

⁽⁷⁾ [v. *infra*, p. 444, No. 497, *min.*]

⁽⁸⁾ [Sir Edward Grey himself then drafted the telegram printed *infra*, p. 442, No. 495.]

Communication from Count Benckendorff of May 27, 1913.

M. Sazonov to Count Benckendorff.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 24204/19208/13/44.

St-Petersbourg, le 12/25 Mai, 1913.

Il est extrêmement désirable que Sir Edward Grey se rende bien clairement compte de toute l'importance pour nous de la question arménienne, tant au point de vue de notre situation intérieure au Caucase, qu'à celui de nos intérêts dans les régions limitrophes turques. Dès le début de la crise balcanique nos efforts constants ont tendu à conjurer le danger d'une conflagration en Asie Mineure. Si cette tâche nous a jusqu'ici réussi, ce n'est que grâce aux promesses constamment renouvelées aux arméniens que la Russie veille à leurs intérêts et que le moment venu, elle prendrait en main la question des réformes, en y associant les Puissances alliées et amies. Au lieu d'observer avec inquiétude toute action qui lui semble de nature à pouvoir restreindre ses prérogatives, la Turquie devrait aller au devant du danger le plus imminent, celui de voir surgir à nos confins des complications sérieuses, qui, bien entendu ne pourraient pas nous laisser indifférents. Nous avons un intérêt commun avec la Turquie de prévenir pareilles éventualités. Dans la disposition actuelle d'esprit des arméniens le seul moyen pacifique qui puisse conjurer le danger d'un soulèvement général, est l'introduction des réformes garanties soit par la Russie seule, soit conjointement avec l'Angleterre et la France. La Turquie se trouve de nouveau devant le dilemme, ou bien de conserver intacte son intégrité territoriale en se désistant de la plénitude d'un pouvoir arbitraire, ou bien de rester sourde aux leçons qu'elle vient de subir. Il faut noter la différence essentielle entre le caractère des réformes en Europe et celles projetées pour les vilayets arméniens. Si les Turcs avaient des raisons pour estimer que l'autonomie de la Macédoine n'était qu'une étape vers la perte de cette région, il en est bien autrement pour des réformes dans les vilayets arméniens, qui, même dans les rêves des exaltés, ne sauraient aboutir à l'autonomie d'un peuple arménien, partout en minorité.

Veuillez faire part de ces considérations à Sir Edward Grey. Nous espérons qu'il voudra bien comprendre que, quelque désireux que nous soyons de déférer à son projet de choisir Londres pour lieu de pourparlers entre l'Angleterre, la France et la Russie, des raisons d'ordre politique et pratique nous obligent à préférer Constantinople, où les ambassadeurs mieux renseignés et en contact avec la Porte et les arméniens, seraient plus à même de remplir la tâche qui leur incombera. Quant à la crainte que la Turquie puisse s'adresser à une autre Puissance, il nous semble qu'une explication franche et cordiale avec la Sublime Porte pourrait lui faire comprendre qu'il lui appartient de choisir entre une coopération avec nous, basée sur une communauté d'intérêts, ou bien de voir la Russie déliée de tout engagement et appliquée à la sauvegarde de ses intérêts dans la mesure appropriée aux circonstances.

⁽¹⁾ [A copy of this note was sent to M. Isvolski in Paris. *cp. Stieve, III, pp. 165-6*]

Mr. O'Bcirne to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 25212/19208/13/44.

(No. 172.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, D. May 27, 1913.

R. June 2, 1913.

I read to the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs yesterday your telegram No. 422 of the 23rd instant⁽²⁾ explaining the grounds on which His Majesty's Government had decided to lend a few British officers to the Turkish Government for the organisation of a gendarmerie in Asiatic Turkey. Monsieur Sazonow remarked that he feared that the views of the two Powers were far apart on this subject, and he communicated to me two telegrams which he had addressed to Count Benckendorff stating that it was entirely impossible for the Russian Government to withdraw their objections to British officers being entrusted with the reorganisation of the gendarmerie in the Armenian vilayets, and also insisting that the general question of reforms in Asiatic Turkey should be discussed by the three Ambassadors in Constantinople.⁽³⁾ As you are doubtless in possession of the substance of these telegrams, which set forth very fully the reasons for Monsieur Sazonow's attitude, I will confine myself to reporting some remarks of His Excellency which may throw additional light on Russian policy in Asiatic Turkey.

His Excellency stated to me very emphatically that the Armenians in Turkey aspire to the annexation of the Armenian vilayets by Russia. Some time ago the Katholikos had been to St. Petersburg, and had approached the Russian Government with this request, and afterwards he had despatched another Armenian dignitary on the same mission. The Armenians realised that they could never form an autonomous state, because they were only some 30% of the population of the Turkish provinces which they inhabited, and therefore they aimed at incorporation by Russia. He, Monsieur Sazonow, had replied that there could be no question of annexation; that Russia did not desire to increase her responsibilities to that extent (and these, His Excellency assured me, were Russia's real sentiments); but that on the other hand she would see to it that effective reforms were carried out in Turkish Armenia. Russia had thus, His Excellency went on to say to me, placed herself under certain obligations, and her position in regard to Turkish Armenia was such that she could not possibly let other Powers take the lead in matters effecting [*sic*] those regions, while she herself played second violin. There were moreover Armenian deputies in the Russian Duma, who were constantly reminding him of Russia's responsibilities in that quarter.

I said that, precisely on account of Russia's special position, Turkey would probably not consent to employ Russian officers in the regions concerned. What did His Excellency propose to do in that case? Monsieur Sazonow replied that the officers need not be exclusively Russians, they might be of mixed nationality. He did not wish to have Germans in those parts, but there might be some French and English. However he had not thought this matter out and did not wish to pronounce himself definitely upon it. On my expressing some astonishment that he should feel any apprehensions as to the effect of British officers being entrusted with the sole charge of the Gendarmerie, he remarked that they would no doubt be Anglo-Indian officers, and he knew what these were. I enquired what he proposed to do if the Turks said that sooner than employ officers of mixed nationality as he suggested, they would have no foreign officers at all. He replied with great emphasis that he would then intimate to Turkey that in the absence of a properly organised *gendarmerie* disorder and massacres of Armenians were certain to occur and that in that case Russia would intervene. He added that Russia would not repeat the mistake committed by

⁽¹⁾ [A copy of this despatch was sent to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 436, No. 489.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 433, No. 484; p. 434, No. 486; p. 438, No. 492; p. 440, No. 493.]

Prince Lobanoff in 1895 by remaining passive in the presence of Armenian massacres, and it was impossible, he said, that Armenians should live any longer under the constant menace of such occurrences.

As regards the general question of reforms in Asiatic Turkey, the Minister for Foreign Affairs was equally emphatic in maintaining his point of view that the question should be discussed by the Ambassadors of the three Powers in Constantinople, while entirely agreeing with you that this should be merely a preliminary exchange of views and that a scheme of reforms must be eventually put forward by all the Powers. He said that the Ambassadors would be in touch with the Armenians which, in the circumstances was indispensable, and that they could consult the Armenian Patriarch. They would moreover have the advantage of disposing of special information regarding the local conditions in the regions concerned, which, he said, could not be available in London.

I have, &c.

HUGH O'BEIRNE.

No. 495.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. O'Beirne.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 24204/19208/13/44.

Tel. (No. 424.)

Foreign Office, May 28, 1913, 4.35 P.M.

Your telegram No. 197.⁽²⁾

I entirely agree that it is desirable to proceed with a scheme of reforms and I shall be delighted if Russian M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] will take the initiative especially as regards Armenian Vilayets.

Reforms will also be required for the whole of Asia Minor and upon these as a whole it seems to me impossible to enter without taking Germany into consultation, owing to her commercial interests. To attempt to do it through their Ambassadors alone at Constantinople would lead to complications both with Turkey and other Powers.

Two alternatives occur to me.

1. That Russian M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] should say that Russia in consultation with Turkey will draw up a scheme of reform for the Armenian Vilayets and then propose it to the Powers and that Russian M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] should simultaneously propose that reforms for the rest of Asiatic Turkey should be discussed by the six Ambassadors at Constantinople.

2. That Russian M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] should propose that a comprehensive scheme of reforms for Asiatic Turkey as a whole should be discussed by all the Powers preferably by means of Ambassadors at Constantinople.

I have no desire to have matter discussed in London.

I will instruct you subsequently about employment of British officers for gendarmerie.

A further suggestion is that M. Sazonow should propose to the Powers the scheme of reforms drawn up by France Russia and England in 1895⁽³⁾ and communicated to the Powers then, but if Russia will take the initiative in my proposal the Russian Gov[ernment] must decide what course they prefer.⁽⁴⁾

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Constantinople (No. 230) on May 30. (F.O. 25645/19208/13/44.)]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 438, No. 492.]

⁽³⁾ [v. A. & P., (1896), XCV, (C. 7923), pp. 163-92. The text of the scheme was transmitted by Sir P. Currie with his despatch (No. 243), D. April 18, R. April 22, 1895. (F.O. 78/4610.)]

⁽⁴⁾ [The last paragraph of this telegram was added by Sir Edward Grey as a result of a conversation with M. Paul Cambon. *cp.* immediately succeeding document, and *note* ⁽¹⁾.]

No. 496.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.

F.O. 24846/19208/13/44.

(No. 339.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, May 28, 1913.

M. Cambon told me to-day⁽¹⁾ that he had explained to Count Benckendorff the difficulty, if not the impossibility, of our refusing to do any thing for the Gendarmerie in Asia Minor. Count Benckendorff had explained equally strongly that M. Sazonof would be overwhelmed with attacks if the British Gendarmerie went alone to Armenia. M. Cambon thought that we might agree that the Gendarmerie should not go to any of the Vilayets on the Russian frontier, but should be employed in the Vilayets near Constantinople, and thence gradually extended.

I said that I should be delighted if Russia would take the lead about reforms in Armenia. But reforms would take a long time to put in operation. There were people here who took considerable interest in the Armenians, and if a few weeks hence a massacre occurred, and the Turks pleaded that they had asked us for assistance and we had refused, we should be in an indefensible position.

I told M. Cambon of the suggestions that I was making to M. Sazonof about financial and other reforms for Asiatic Turkey.

M. Cambon said that it had occurred to him that, as in 1895 England, France, and Russia had drawn up a scheme of reforms for Armenia and communicated it to the other Powers, this scheme of reforms might now be drawn to their notice again.⁽²⁾

I said that I would make this suggestion also to M. Sazonof.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

⁽¹⁾ [*cp. D.D.F., 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VI, pp. 747-8, No. 641.*]⁽²⁾ [*cp. immediately preceding document.*]

No. 497.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 23941/19208/13/44.

(No. 334.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, May 29, 1913.

The French Amb[assado]r informed Sir A. Nicolson on the 22nd inst[ant] that the French M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] had received from the Russian M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] the same request as H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] as regards the elaboration of reforms for Asiatic Turkey, and asked for our views. M. Cambon proposed to reply, as his own opinion, that the moment was not opportune for H[is] M[ajesty's], the French, and the Russian Ambassadors at Constantinople to discuss and propose concrete measures of reform. There were several questions still unsettled, and moreover it would be necessary to await the decisions of the Conference at Paris as to financial questions, it being possible that some kind of financial control would be necessary. Furthermore the duty of drawing up reforms for Asiatic Turkey is a matter for all the Powers and not for three alone.

The question of the loan of some British officers to organise the gendarmerie in the Armenian vilayets is, as Sir A. N[icolson] explained to M. Cambon, a separate

⁽¹⁾ [A copy of this despatch was sent to the Director of Military Operations.]

matter, which would not affect the general question of reforms. M. Cambon quite understood this and realised that H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] could not refuse the request of the Turkish Gov[ernment].

[I am, &c.
E. GREY.]

MINUTE.

M. Cambon told me subsequently to the interview recorded here that he found he had made a slip of memory and that in 1895 the 3 Ambass[ador]s did draw up a project of reforms later submitted to all the Powers and agreed to by them.⁽²⁾ In our tel[egram] No. 422⁽³⁾ to Mr. O'Beirne I therefore omitted any allusion to what passed in 1895.

A. N.

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

⁽³⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 436, No. 489.]

No. 498.

Communication from Count Benckendorff of May 31, 1913.

M. Sazonov to Count Benckendorff.

F.O. 25824/19208/13/44.

Le Chargé d'Affaires Britannique a fait au nom de son Gouvernement, au Gouvernement Impérial la proposition ou bien de s'entendre directement avec la Turquie ou bien de prendre l'initiative de propositions concrètes sur la question des réformes en invitant toutes les Puissances à y participer.⁽¹⁾ Veuillez tout d'abord remercier Sir Edward Grey de cette proposition. Veuillez ensuite lui répondre ce qui suit: la première proposition nous paraît moins pratique et de nature à pouvoir inspirer des appréhensions à d'autres Puissances. Nous acceptons la seconde en renouvelant nos remerciements au Gouvernement Britannique de l'intention amicale, dont il est empreint à notre égard.

Nous chargeons en conséquence notre ambassadeur à Constantinople d'établir les principes fondamentaux des réformes voulues, en prenant pour base le projet élaboré en 1895, qui devra être remanié conformément aux nouvelles exigences. Ce projet devrait faire l'objet d'un examen préalable et confidentiel de nos Ambassadeurs à Constantinople et de l'ambassadeur de France dans le but d'établir un accord complet entre nous, après quoi nous pourrions nous adresser aux autres Puissances. Pour éviter toute méfiance des Puissances ou de la Porte ces pourparlers devront garder le caractère le plus strictement confidentiel.

Veuillez communiquer ce qui précède à Sir Edward Grey et nous informer de sa réponse.

⁽¹⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 442, No. 495, Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 424) to Mr. O'Beirne of May 28, 1913. *cp. D.D.F.*, 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VII, pp. 13-4, No. 7.]

No. 499.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 25842/19208/13/44.

(No. 176.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, June 2, 1913.

The German Ambassador told me to-day⁽²⁾ of the anxiety in Berlin about Asiatic Turkey. Germany desired to see Turkey maintained in her possession; but, if other

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. G.P.*, XXXVIII, pp. 65-6.]

Powers made claims, Germany would have to put in her own claim. He had assured the Chancellor that I had told him that there was no arrangement between France, Russia, and ourselves for dividing Asiatic Turkey.

I confirmed this, and said that I thought that there should be a comprehensive scheme of reforms for Asiatic Turkey, but that the reforms should be discussed by all the Powers. I thought that some reforms had been discussed in 1895.

The Ambassador said that these were for the Armenian Vilayets only.

I replied that perhaps special provisions might be required for these Vilayets, but there should be a scheme for the whole. We had been asked to lend officials to Turkey, but we were restricting our assent to the lending of Officers for the Gendarmerie in districts where they might be wanted urgently to prevent disorders from arising. If, some weeks hence, massacres occurred, and the Turks said that they had asked for help and been refused, it would be very disagreeable.

The Ambassador agreed to this.

I also said that the employment of whatever Officers were lent now would be provisional as regards the particular use made of them, though no doubt they might be absorbed in a larger scheme later on.

The Ambassador said that he was very glad to hear this. There could be no objection to lending Officers for the Gendarmerie. It had been reported from Constantinople that we were to organise a whole Civil Service for Turkey. This would have created apprehension, and it might have been taken to imply another Egypt.

I said that we had been asked for all sorts of Inspectors and Advisers, but for the very reason he named we had asked the Turks not to press for so much, as it would inevitably lead to trouble with the other Powers.⁽³⁾ My feeling was that a comprehensive scheme of reforms should be drawn up for Asiatic Turkey by the Powers in consultation with Turkey,⁽⁴⁾ and Europeans could then be selected for carrying out the reforms that had been internationally agreed to. The Ambassador assented to these views.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

⁽³⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp. 437-8, No. 491.]

⁽⁴⁾ [*cp.* Sir Edward Grey's speech in the House of Commons on May 29, 1913 *Parl. Deb.*, 5th Ser., (House of Commons), Vol. 53, pp. 390-2.]

No. 500.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

St. Petersburg, June 4, 1913.

F.O. 25645/19208/13/44.

D. 8-25 P.M.

Tel. (No. 202.)

R. 10 P.M.

Reforms in Asiatic Turkey.

Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs informs me that he is awaiting your reply to communication which Russian Ambassador in London was instructed to make to you to the effect that the Russian Government preferred the third alternative mentioned in your telegram No. 424 of May 28⁽²⁾ to me, but would desire a confidential and preliminary exchange of views of the three Ambassadors at Constantinople.⁽³⁾ His

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Constantinople (as No. 243) on June 5. Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, No. 442, No. 495.]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 444, No. 498.]

Excellency is anxious to know whether you have sent the necessary instructions to Sir G. Lowther.

He explained that some modifications might be necessary in the scheme of reforms drawn up in 1895, and that it was important that the three Powers should be in agreement on the subject.

No. 501.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. O'Beirne.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 25645/19208/13/44.

Tel. (No. 434.)

Foreign Office, June 5, 1913.

Your tel[egram] No. 202.⁽²⁾

The German Ambassador has twice spoken to me about this question and yesterday⁽³⁾ informed me that he was instructed to bring it before the Reunion to-day. I said the question of a comprehensive scheme of Reforms for Asiatic Turkey would have to be considered by all the Powers but that the Reunion had decided at its last meeting that it would not embark on discussion of new questions beyond its original programme.⁽⁴⁾ German Ambassador did not raise the question to-day.

It is however most important that Russian M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] should place the question before the Powers at once otherwise a proposal may be made from some other quarter.

I would suggest that Russian M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] should propose the alternative that he prefers simultaneously at all the five capitals. He could propose the scheme of reforms of 1895 as the base of discussion.

Meanwhile British Ambassador at Constantinople can enter upon discussion informally with his Russian and French colleagues at Constantinople as to any modifications that seem necessary in the scheme before formal discussion of the scheme at Constantinople with all the Ambassadors which cannot begin till Russian M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] has made his proposal to the five Powers and it has been accepted in principle.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Constantinople (No. 244).]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

⁽³⁾ [cp. *G.P.*, XXXVIII, p. 66.]

⁽⁴⁾ [cp. *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II), p. 825, No. 1019.]

No. 502.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 25929/19208/13/44.

(No. 174.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, June 6, 1913.

Sir A. Nicolson told the Turkish Amb[assado]r on the 4th inst[ant] that one or two Powers had, with the desire—a desire by which all the Powers were animated—to fortify and consolidate the Ottoman Empire in Asia, approached H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] with the view of elaborating as speedily as possible a project of reforms for Asiatic Turkey to be submitted to the Porte. In these circum[stan]ces it would be

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch was based upon Sir A. Nicolson's record of his conversation with Tewfik Pasha. He added further: "I suppose we had now better ask the War Office and India Office to look out for 6 or 7 officers, and also let St. Petersburg know. A. N." v. *infra*, pp. 453-4, No. 513, and *note* (2).]

proceeding in an inverted order to nominate functionaries to carry out reforms which had not been instituted, and it was clearly more logical and practical to draw up and have a project of reforms ready, and then to discuss the question of foreign advisers, &c. To this Tewfik P[ash]a agreed.

Sir A. N[icolson] added that if his Gov[ernment] anticipated disorders H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] would be ready to lend a few officers to organise a Gendarmerie, but their employment would have to be in the first instance provisional.

Tewfik P[ash]a said that the maintenance of security was essential and urgent; that order was being maintained at present by the troops, but that these were not the best force for the purpose, and that a gendarmerie was necessary.

Sir A. N[icolson] said that he would report to me what H[is] H[ighness] had said.

[I am, &c.]
E. G[REY].

No. 503.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 26654/19208/13/44.

(No. 503.) Confidential.

Constantinople, D. June 6, 1913.

Sir:—

R. June 11, 1913.

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your despatches No. 150 (19208/13) of May 19th,⁽²⁾ No. 152 (22523/13) of May 15th,⁽³⁾ and No. 160 (21451/13) of May 24th,⁽⁴⁾ forwarding copies of the Ottoman Ambassador's communications respecting the employment of some twenty five British officials in Northern and Eastern Anatolia together with Syria, and of your reply thereto.

In my despatch No. 343 Confidential of April 24th,⁽⁵⁾ I had the honour to report, with reference to similar proposals for the provinces of what was then Turkey in Europe, that the Austrian Ambassador was alleged to have pertinently enquired of the Ottoman Minister for Foreign Affairs whether "a monopoly was to be given to England" in the matter, and to observe that a like scheme for Eastern Anatolia and Syria might be similarly looked upon by Russia and France, while these objections would not seem to apply to Western Asia Minor and Mesopotamia.

These Turkish proposals would seem of a nature to beget the maximum of friction and antagonism between England, France and Russia in the Ottoman Empire, and their logical sequence would be proposals that German officials should reform the Basra and Bagdad Sector and that French officials should be engaged for Adana, Konieh and other such vilayets of Asia Minor which Germany may be held to regard as her special sphere of influence. The line of least friction and resistance in the matter would seem to be that the foreign officials for the North East Anatolian provinces should be Russian; those for Mesopotamia, British; those for Syria, French; and those for Adana and Western Asia Minor, German or other. Tewfik Pasha's communication of April 24th⁽⁶⁾ further remarks that these proposals are meant to be in conformity with the spirit of the Cyprus Convention of June 4th, 1878,⁽⁷⁾ which is a defensive Alliance against Russia, and Tewfik Pasha remarks that the Ottoman Government does not wish Russia to participate in the reforms of the seven provinces in the vicinity of her Caucasian border.

⁽¹⁾ [A copy of this despatch was sent to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 432-3, No. 483.]

⁽³⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 431-2, No. 482.]

⁽⁴⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 437-8, No. 491, and note ⁽¹⁾.]

⁽⁵⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 426-7, No. 478.]

⁽⁶⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 427-9, No. 479, and *encl.*]

⁽⁷⁾ [v. Hertslet: *Map of Europe by Treaty*, Vol. IV, pp. 2722-3.]

The international aspect of the matter is one which concerns His Majesty's Government but, as I have already had the honour to point out, the Armenians have been convinced by the bitter experiences of the last thirty-five years that effectual reforms in their provinces can only be under the ægis or auspices of Russia and that only evil can accrue to them from antagonism between England and Russia, whereas in harmonious co-operation between those two Powers, as in the case of the last phase of the Macedonian question, a remedy is likely to be found for the evils from which they have suffered since reforms were guaranteed by the Treaty of Berlin and the Convention of Cyprus.

The request of the Ottoman Government for seventeen British officials, "acquainted with the ways and wants of the East," is in itself a confession of inability of the Turks to reform the seven Kurdo-Armenian provinces, in which the Turkish element is practically non-existent. If the reforms have to be carried out by non-Turkish and foreign agency, the geographical proximity of Russia and the peace and prosperity enjoyed by the two millions of Armenians in the contiguous Russian provinces of the Caucasus are convincing indications to Ottoman Armenians that the only real reforms must be mainly through Russian agency, just as recently threatened disorders and massacres in the Van, Bitlis, &c., districts are reported to have been averted solely by the fear of Russian intervention.

It is alleged that the decision of the inner circle of the Committee of Union and Progress which inspires and directs the policy of the present Cabinet, is that the reforms in Asiatic Turkey are to be Anglo-German, and Tewfik Pasha's statement would go to prove that the exclusion of Russia is also aimed at. I feel it a duty to report the opinion of Armenians and other competent observers that any projects of reform of an anti-Russian tendency in the provinces inhabited by the Armenians are almost certain to be fraught with disastrous instead of beneficial results to the latter.

I may add that it is held here as an axiom that, when the Committee of Union and Progress is in power, the Triple Alliance is in Power, the direction of Turkey's policy with neighbouring European Countries being Austro-German in inspiration and her policy in matters affecting Asiatic Turkey being mainly influenced by Germany, and it may be that all that passes between the Ottoman Embassy in London and your Office on the subject of reforms in the Armenian provinces is confidentially known to the German Embassy in London.

The present Cabinet has not broached to me the question of these projected reforms and I have consequently not alluded to the matter in my conversations with the Porte.

I have, &c.

GERARD LOWTHER.

No. 504.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.

F.O. 25645/19208/13/44.

Tel. (No. 251.)

Foreign Office, June 7, 1913, 5 P.M.

You may act on the concluding paragraph of my tel[egram] No. 434 (of June 5)⁽¹⁾ to Mr. O'Beirne repeated to you in my tel[egram] No. 244.

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 446, No. 501, and *note* ⁽¹⁾.]

Communication from Count Benckendorff of June 7, 1913.⁽¹⁾

*Circulaire confidentielle urgente de M. Sazonof, en date de St. Petersbourg.
le 24 Mai/6 Juin 1913.*⁽²⁾

F.O. 26538/19208/13/44.

La situation de la population Arménienne dans les régions de la Turquie d'Europe qu'elle habite, rend urgente l'étude des reformes nécessaires à la pacification de ces régions. Plus que toute autre Puissance, la Russie est intéressée à ce que le maintien de l'ordre et de la paix y soit assuré, tant à titre de pays limitrophe, que pour cause du nombre très considérable d'Arméniens habitant en deça de ses confins, au Caucase surtout.

La question se pose si les Puissances ne jugeraient pas opportun de procéder à l'étude tant du principe des réformes nécessaires, que de celui des moyens d'en assurer l'application.

Le Gouvernement Impérial est d'opinion que le plus pratique serait de prendre comme base des études en question le projet de 1895, en l'adaptant aux exigences actuelles.

Le Gouvernement Impérial proposerait de confier aux Ambassadeurs des Puissances à Constantinople, plus à même de juger des exigences locales, le soin de procéder sans retard aux délibérations en question.

⁽¹⁾ [v. immediately succeeding document.]

⁽²⁾ [cp. *D.D.F.*, 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VII, pp. 51-2, No. 45.]

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. O'Beirne.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 26538/19208/13/44.

Tel. (No. 441.) Confidential

Foreign Office, June 9, 1913, 4.30 p.m.

My telegram No. 434 of June 5.⁽²⁾

Count Benckendorff communicated to-day (7th) a conf[idential] circular from M. Sazonov,⁽³⁾ suggesting that the Powers should now proceed to study the question of Armenian reforms, taking as a basis of discussion the 1895 project.

You should inform M. Sazonov that I accept his proposal.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Constantinople (No. 252).]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 446, No. 501.]

⁽³⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 26870/19208/13/44.

St. Petersburg, D. June 11, 1913, 11.20 p.m.

Tel. (No. 210.) Confidential.

R. June 12, 1913, 11.20 a.m.

Your tel[egram] No. 441 of June 9.⁽²⁾

German and Austrian Governments have signified they accept Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs' proposal on condition however that Turkey take part in deliberations of Ambassadors at Constantinople.⁽³⁾

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Berlin (as No. 213); to Vienna (as No. 178); to Constantinople (as No. 261); to Paris, by bag. Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

⁽³⁾ [cp. *G.P.*, XXXVIII, pp. 69-70.]

Russian M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] strongly objects to this suggestion. He says that it could only lead to intrigues on the part of Turkey and that only logical course is for Ambassadors to elaborate a scheme of reforms which would then be presented to Turkey with authority of all the Powers. He would be most grateful if you would speak in this sense at Berlin.

MINUTES.

If our object is to secure the adoption of reforms, it will be necessary to carry the Turks with us—as well as the Germans and Austrians. If we do not do this, we shall be inviting defeat. M. Sazonov cannot suppose that Austria and Germany would consent to impose a scheme upon Turkey, if necessary, by force. The Turks have drawn up a scheme of reforms and they have shown their readiness to apply them, by calling upon us to supply them with officials. I think that these considerations should be pointed out to M. Sazonov and the absolute necessity of adopting some compromise which will satisfy the Triple Alliance and Turkey. Unless this is done, M. Sazonov is preparing for himself a humiliation at the hands of the Triple Alliance and we shall hear no more of reform.

It is necessary for us to take a somewhat strong line in this matter owing, for one reason, to public opinion here. No one will believe in Russian reforms in Armenia especially when the recent exploits of a Russian Consul, who has been touring the country in the capacity of an Agent provocateur, are revealed.

Perhaps a frank explanation with Count Benckendorff, which could be telegraphed to Sir G. Buchanan would be the best way of letting your views be known.

It might at the same time be as well to remind H[is] E[xc]cellency of the extent to which we are committed to the maintenance of Turkish integrity and to her regeneration, of our opposition to anything in the nature of a policy which would lead to her further dismemberment—a policy which would raise amongst others the question of Constantinople and which could hardly be carried out without a European war. It would be interesting to know what are M. Sazonov's real views on this subject—and it is a question on which we should also keep in close touch with France—in order to prevent an understanding being come to without our knowledge.

L. M.

June 12, [19]13.

Bring up to discuss with me to-morrow.⁽⁴⁾

E. G.

12 6 13.

(4) [v. immediately succeeding document.]

No. 508.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 26870/19208/13/44.

Tel. (No. 453.)

Foreign Office, June 13, 1913, 6.20 P.M.

Mr. O'Beirne's tel[egram] No. 210.⁽²⁾

I think it is impossible to meet German and Austrian proposals with a point blank refusal. It will be necessary at some stage to discuss reforms with Turkey and no scheme will be accepted by her without complete and cordial cooperation of all the Powers.

I would suggest that Turkey should be informed that Ambassadors wish to consider a scheme of reforms that could be proposed for Asiatic provinces to which Powers could give their cordial support and assistance: that with this object Turkey should communicate to the Ambassadors the scheme of reforms which it is understood she has already drawn up; and that after Ambassadors have considered the whole question they will enter into communication with Turkish Gov[ernment]. This would

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Paris (No. 234); to Berlin (No. 212); to Vienna (No. 177); to Constantinople (No. 253), "for information only."]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

result in elaboration of a scheme of reforms by the Ambassadors as desired by M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs]. Ambassadors would of course not be limited to consideration of Turkish scheme but would only take it into consideration when discussing amongst themselves modifications of 1895 proposals. Portions of Turkish scheme might very likely be usefully incorporated or adapted.

If M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] agrees with this view and urges it at Berlin I will support it.

No. 509.

Communication from Count Benckendorff of June 14, 1913.⁽¹⁾

M. Sazonov to Count Benckendorff.

Saint-Pétersbourg,

F.O. 27916/19208/13/44.

le 30 mai (12 juin), 1913.

Dans un entretien avec l'Ambassadeur d'Allemagne,⁽²⁾ M. Sazonof a relevé combien serait peu désirable le concours d'un représentant de la Turquie à la conférence projetée des Ambassadeurs au sujet des réformes arméniennes.

Un pareil concours y introduirait un élément dangereux et de nature à traîner l'affaire en longueur.

D'après nos informations, la situation dans les vilayets arméniens est telle qu'il n'y a plus de temps à perdre.

La nouvelle qu'un représentant de la Turquie pourrait siéger au sein de ladite conférence produira certainement une impression de désappointement sérieux dans les sphères arméniennes. La Russie, en prenant l'initiative, ne poursuit qu'un but de pacification la plus rapide et complète possible. Pareille impression parmi les Arméniens ne pourrait que contrecarrer les intentions du Gouvernement Impérial ainsi que celles de toutes les Puissances, sur la solidarité desquelles le Gouvernement Impérial aime pouvoir compter.

Les réformes élaborées d'un commun accord communiquées à la Sublime Porte ne manqueront pas, dans notre opinion, d'exercer sur le Gouvernement turc l'impression nécessaire.⁽³⁾

⁽¹⁾ [The text given above is taken from the copy in the *Confidential Print*, as the original cannot be traced. *cp. D.D.F.*, 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VII, p. 108, No. 105.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. G.P.*, XXXVIII, pp. 76-7.]

⁽³⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's reply to Count Benckendorff, dated June 18, 1913 (F.O. 27916/19208/13/44), mentions and practically repeats his telegram (No. 453) to Sir G. Buchanan, v. immediately preceding document. A copy was sent to the Director of Military Operations.]

No. 510.

Communication from Count Benckendorff of June 16, 1913.⁽¹⁾

M. Sazonov to Count Benckendorff.

F.O. 27301/19208/13/44.

Confidentielle.

St. Pétersbourg, le 2/15 Juin 1913.

Circulaire. M. O'Beirne m'a communiqué un aide-mémoire exposant le point de vue de Sir E. Grey sur la procédure des délibérations sur les réformes arméniennes.⁽²⁾ Selon Sir Edward la Porte devrait être invitée à présenter un projet de réformes pour

⁽¹⁾ [*cp. D.D.F.*, 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VII, p. 131, No. 121.]

⁽²⁾ [The reference is probably to an *aide-mémoire* based on Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 434) of June 5. v. *supra*, p. 446, No. 501; *cp. also supra*, p. 442, No. 495; pp. 445-6, No. 500]

les provinces asiatiques, projet qui ferait l'objet de la délibération des Ambassadeurs. Ceux-ci se mettraient ensuite en contact avec le Gouvernement Turc. J'ai répondu que ce plan ne me semblait pas pratique. Le projet qui servira de base aux délibérations, celui qui fut élaboré en 1895, est déjà connu par le Gouvernement Turc. Quand les Puissances se seront entendues sur les modifications à y introduire et quand un accord se sera établi entre elles, il conviendra, bien entendu, de s'adresser à la Sublime Porte pour l'inviter à présenter ses observations et de prendre part aux délibérations. Nous sommes très loin de désirer porter atteinte au prestige et à l'autorité du Sultan. Loin de là, nous croyons que les réformes présentent le seul moyen pour consolider l'intégrité Turque. Mais notre initiative empreinte d'un caractère tout amical envers la Turquie est provoquée par des circonstances qui réclament dans l'intérêt de la paix générale une solution la plus prompte possible. C'est dans ce sens que je me suis exprimé avec le Chargé d'Affaires Britannique et aussi avec celui d'Autriche-Hongrie.⁽³⁾

(³) [*cp. infra*, pp. 452-3, Nos. 511-2.]

No. 511.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

St. Petersburg, June 16, 1913.

F.O. 27301/19208/13/44.

D. 12.6 A.M.

Tel. (No. 220.)

R. 8 A.M.

I spoke to M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] yesterday in the sense of your tel[egram] No. 458 of June 13,⁽²⁾ and left with him an aide-memoire.

H[is] E[xc]ellency said that he had already sent a circular telegram to Russian R[ep]R[esentatives] abroad suggesting that Ambassadors at Constantinople should first draw up a scheme of reforms and then place themselves in communication with the Porte.⁽³⁾ Position of Armenians was most serious and it was necessary to convince them that the Powers were themselves taking reforms seriously in hand. Were your proposal acted on they would believe that elaboration of reforms was being left to Turkey. He had moreover no confidence in Germany. She was annoyed at Russia having taken the initiative and would probably declare that Turkish scheme was excellent and must be (?) tolerated. There would then be a division amongst the Powers.

I pointed out that all you suggested was that Ambassadors should ask Turkey to communicate to them scheme she had drafted so that they might examine it in connection with reform proposals which their respective Gov[ernmen]ts might put forward. This procedure did not bind them to adopt Turkish scheme and I could not see how anyone could take exception to it. Its rejection would not prevent German Gov[ernmen]t from advocating adoption of Turkish scheme as the Porte was sure to communicate it to them even if Ambassadors did not ask for it.

H[is] E[xc]ellency said he would think over the matter and send me a written reply.

As regards eventual execution of reforms, M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] quite shared your view that we must avoid dividing up the country into "secteurs" as was done in Macedonia. He remarked however that he did not want to have any Germans entrusted with control of reforms near the Russian frontier.

(1) [This telegram was sent to Berlin (as No. 214); to Vienna (as No. 181); to Constantinople (as No. 263), "for information"; to Paris by bag. Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

(2) [*v. supra*, pp. 450-1, No. 508.]

(3) [*v. immediately preceding document.*]

MINUTE.

M. Sazonov may reconsider his attitude which is unreasonable. The important part of this telegram is M. Sazonov's concurrence in our views as regards avoiding partitioning the Asiatic provinces into secteurs. We must get the French Gov[er]nment to take the same line—and we shall hear no more of spheres of influence.

L. M.

No. 512.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 27801/19208/13/44.

Tel. (No. 457.)

Foreign Office, June 16, 1913, 10 P.M.

Your tel[egram] No. 220.⁽²⁾

From a communication that Russian Ambassador has received from M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] it appears that M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] thinks I am suggesting that Porte should be invited to draft a scheme of reform as basis for Ambassadors to work upon.

What I really suggest is that Ambassadors should inform Porte that they are setting to work on basis of 1895 scheme and that if Porte desires the scheme, which it is understood Porte has already drafted, to be considered in connection with 1895 scheme, Porte should communicate it to Ambassadors at once. There is no loss of time in this procedure; Ambassadors could begin work and if Porte did not communicate its scheme at once it would not be considered.

If Germany desired to use Turkish scheme as an alternative to defeat Russian proposals, she could do so more effectively if the scheme was put forward later by Turkey as an independent alternative than if it was taken into consideration by Ambassadors ab initio. Ambassadors could if it was desired rule out such portions as were not consistent with taking 1895 proposals as basis of discussion.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated, on June 17, to Paris (No. 239); to Constantinople (No. 264); to Berlin (No. 215); to Vienna (No. 183.)]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

No. 513.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.

F.O. 25929/19208/13/44.

(No. 221.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, June 16, 1913.

With ref[erence] to your Tel[egram] No. 210 of June 11,⁽¹⁾ relative to the employment of British officers to command the gendarmerie in the seven vilayets of Eastern and North Eastern Anatolia, I tr[ansmit] to Y[our] E[xc]ellency herewith copies of further correspondence on the subject.⁽²⁾

⁽¹⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 449–50, No. 507.]

⁽²⁾ [These enclosures were Sir Edward Grey's despatch (No. 174) of June 6, to Sir G. Lowther (v. *supra*, pp. 446–7, No. 502), and letters from the Foreign Office to the War Office and India Office, "with a view to the selection from the British and Indian armies of seven officers suitable for these posts." (F.O. 25929/19208/13/44.)]

Y[our] E[xcellency] should inform the Russian M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] of the reply which has been returned to the request of the Turkish Gov[ernment] and of the action which I have taken in the matter, taking care to emphasise the fact that these appointments are to be regarded as provisional and made pending the introduction of a complete scheme of reforms into the Turkish Empire.

[I am, &c.

E. GREY.]

No. 514.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

St. Petersburg, June 17, 1913.

F.O. 27823/19208/13/44.

D. 8 P.M.

Tel. (No. 223.)

R. 10.15 P.M.

Your telegram No. 457 of June 16.⁽²⁾

Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs said he could not explain how misunderstanding had arisen, as he had quite understood your suggestion.

He personally saw no objection to it, but must consult Minister for Foreign Affairs before giving definite reply.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Paris (as No. 240); to Berlin (as No. 216); to Vienna (as No. 184); to Constantinople (as No. 267). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 453, No. 512.]

No. 515.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 28575/19208/13/44.

(No. 545.) Confidential.

Constantinople, D. June 17, 1913.

Sir,

R. June 23, 1913.

Acting on the authority contained in your telegram No. 251 of the 7th instant,⁽²⁾ I conferred informally with my Russian and French colleagues as to a scheme for reforms in Asiatic Turkey which might eventually form the basis of one for discussion with our remaining colleagues.

It was decided to charge Mr. Fitzmaurice, M. Mandlestam, First Dragoman of the Russian Embassy, and Monsieur de St. Quentin, the Second Secretary of the French Embassy to draw up a project in outline.

This draft scheme is in part based on the Armenian reforms of 1895, the law of 1880, revised by the International Commission for the European Provinces of Turkey, the Cretan and Lebanon Statutes and on the new Ottoman Law on the Vilayets of 1913.

My Russian and French colleagues have now examined this again and I have the honour to transmit a copy of the draft which may figure as the Russian proposal. The STATUT ORGANIQUE to be attached thereto will have to be elaborated by all the Powers.

⁽¹⁾ [A copy of this despatch was sent to the Director of Military Operations. *cp. D.D.F., 3^{me} Sér.*, Vol. VII, pp. 189-92, No. 176; pp. 198-9, No. 185.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 448, No. 504.]

My German colleague has informed Monsieur de Giers that he would be prepared to discuss these reforms with the two reserves, namely that the sovereignty of the Sultan must be maintained in the regions in question and that the meetings at which the reforms are to be discussed will take place in the presence of the Turkish Delegate. The first condition is obvious, but the second would naturally give rise to great difficulties, but Monsieur de Giers hopes that the German insistence on this point may be modified.

I have, &c.

GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure in No. 515.

Avant-Projet.

des Réformes à introduire en Arménie élaboré par M. A. Mandelstam, Premier Drogman à l'Ambassade Impériale de Russie à Constantinople sur la base :

du Mémoire des Ambassadeurs de France, de Grande-Bretagne et de Russie à Constantinople sur les réformes en Arménie (mars-avril 1895).⁽³⁾

du Projet de Réformes administratives à introduire dans les provinces arméniennes, élaboré par les Ambassadeurs de France de Grande-Bretagne et de Russie à Constantinople (mars-avril 1895).⁽⁴⁾

du Décret sur les Réformes en Arménie promulgué par Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan en date du 20 octobre 1895.⁽⁵⁾

du Projet de loi des Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe du 11/23 août 1880, élaboré par la Commission Européenne.⁽⁶⁾

et des protocoles et Règlements relatifs au Liban.⁽⁷⁾

I.

1. Il sera formé une seule province des six vilayets suivants : Erzeroum, Van, Bitlis, Diarbekir, Kharpout, Sivas, à l'exclusion de certaines parties situées sur les confins, savoir : Hekkiari, les parties sud de Séert, de Bichérik et de Malatia et la partie nord ouest de Sivas.

2. La province comprendra les divisions administratives suivantes : (1) Sandjak—département. (2) kaza—arrondissement. (3) nahié—commune.

3. La fixation de ces divisions administratives se fera de façon que les populations y soient réparties en groupes ethnographiques le plus homogènes possible.

II.

Le Gouverneur Général (Vali Oumoumi) de la Province Arménienne sera un sujet Ottoman chrétien ou de préférence un Européen nommé par S[a] M[ajesté] I[mpériale] le Sultan pour un terme de 5 ans avec l'assentiment des Puissances.

III.

1. Le Gouverneur Général est le Chef de Pouvoir Exécutif de la Province. Il nomme et révoque tous les agents administratifs de la Province, sans aucune exception. Il nomme également tous les juges de la Province.

2. Les forces de police et de gendarmerie sont placées sous l'autorité directe du Gouverneur Général.

3. Sur la demande du Gouverneur Général les forces militaires devront être mises à sa disposition pour le maintien de l'ordre dans la province.

⁽³⁾ [v. A. & P., (1896), XCV, (C. 7923), pp. 163-73.]

⁽⁴⁾ [v. A. & P., (1896), XCV, (C. 7923), pp. 174-92.]

⁽⁵⁾ [v. A. & P., (1896), XCV, (C. 7923), pp. 288-98.]

⁽⁶⁾ [v. A. & P., (1880), LXXXII, (C. 2704), pp. 3-38. cp. Hertslet: *Map of Europe by Treaty*, Vol. IV, pp. 2990-3, where an abstract is given.]

⁽⁷⁾ [cp. especially Protocol of September 6, 1864, v. *B.F.S.P.*, Vol. 61, pp. 1023-9, and of December 10/23, 1912, v. *B.F.S.P.*, Vol. 106, pp. 752-4.]

IV.

Le Gouverneur Général de la Province sera assisté d'un Conseil Administratif ayant un caractère consultatif et composé :—

- a. des chefs des divers départements de l'administration de la Province.
- b. des chefs spirituels des différentes communautés religieuses.
- c. des conseillers techniques européens, au service du Gouvernement Impérial, assistants des chefs des départements de l'administration.
- d. de 6 Conseillers (3 musulmans et 3 chrétiens) choisis par l'Assemblée Provinciale parmi ses membres.

V.

1. L'Assemblée Provinciale se composera de musulmans et de chrétiens en nombre égal.
2. Les membres de l'Assemblée provinciale seront élus au scrutin secret dans les cazas par les collèges électoraux constitués à cet effet.
3. Le nombre des sièges à attribuer aux différentes nations musulmanes et chrétiennes de la Province sera fixé pour chaque caza séparément. Ce nombre devra être proportionnel aux chiffres des populations du caza autant que cela sera compatible avec le principe du premier paragraphe de cet article.

VI.

1. L'Assemblée Provinciale sera élue pour une durée de cinq années et se réunira une fois par an en session ordinaire de deux mois. Cette session pourra être prolongée par le Gouverneur Général.
2. L'Assemblée pourra être convoquée en session extraordinaire par le Gouverneur Général soit de sa propre initiative soit à la demande des 2/3 de membres de l'Assemblée.
3. Le Gouverneur Général pourra dissoudre l'Assemblée Provinciale. Dans ce cas les électeurs devront être convoqués dans les deux mois et la nouvelle Assemblée devra se réunir dans les quatre mois qui suivront le décret de dissolution.
4. Les décrets de convocation et de dissolution seront promulgués au nom de S[a] M[ajesté] I[mpériale] le Sultan.

VII.

1. L'Assemblée Provinciale légifèrera sur les matières d'intérêt provincial.
2. La compétence législative et budgétaire de l'Assemblée provinciale sera au moins aussi étendue que celle prévue par les articles 82-93 du Projet élaboré en 1880 par la Commission Européenne.⁽⁸⁾
3. Les lois votées seront soumises à la sanction de S[a] M[ajesté] I[mpériale] le Sultan. Cette sanction devra être donnée ou refusée dans les deux mois : ce délai passé le silence du Gouvernement sera interprété comme impliquant la sanction.

VIII.

1. Les Conseils Administratifs des Sandjaks seront présidés par les Mutessarifs et se composeront des chefs des services du Sandjak des chefs spirituels des communautés religieuses et de six membres (dont 3 musulmans et 3 chrétiens) élus par les Conseils Administratifs des Cazas.
2. Les Conseils Administratifs des Kazas seront présidés par les Kaimakams et se composeront des chefs des services du Kaza, des chefs spirituels des communautés religieuses et de quatre membres (dont 2 musulmans et 2 chrétiens) élus par les Conseils des nahies.

⁽⁸⁾ [v. A. & P., (1880), LXXXII, (C. 2704), pp. 11-4. cp. Hertslet: *Map of Europe by Treaty*, Vol. IV, p. 2991.]

3. Les attributions de ces Conseils seront fixées en conformité avec les articles 115-116 et 139-140 du projet de loi élaboré en 1880 par la Commission Européenne.⁽⁹⁾

IX.

1. La circonscription de chaque nahié (commune) sera, autant que possible, fixé de telle façon que les villages appartenant à la même race soient groupés dans un même nahié.

2. Chaque nahié sera administré par un mudir assisté d'un Conseil élu par la population, et composé de quatre membres au minimum et de huit au maximum. Ce conseil choisira parmi ses membres le mudir et son adjoint. Le mudir devra appartenir au groupement ethnique qui forme la majorité des habitants et l'adjoint à l'autre groupement.

3. Dans les nahiés dont la population est mixte la minorité devra être représentée au Conseil proportionnellement à son importance à condition qu'elle comprenne au moins vingt cinq maisons.

4. Les attributions des Conseils des nahiés seront fixées en conformité avec les dispositions des articles 163-168 du Projet de loi, élaboré en 1880, par la Commission Européenne.⁽⁹⁾

X.

1. Il y aura dans chaque nahié un juge de paix nommé par le gouverneur général et appartenant à la religion de la majorité de la population du nahié. Il y aura, en outre, un juge de paix dans chaque chef-lieu de kaza.

2. Le juge de paix connaîtra

1° en matière pénale, sans appel, des contraventions passibles de peines de simple police et, à charge d'appel, des délits n'entraînant pas une peine de plus de 500 piastres d'amende et de trois mois de prison.

2° en matière civile, sans appel, de toute action personnelle, civile et commerciale jusqu'à concurrence de 1000 piastres et, à charge d'appel, des mêmes actions jusqu'à concurrence de 5000 piastres.

3. Le juge de paix tiendra aussi son tribunal en conciliation. Il pourra, sur la demande des parties, désigner des arbitres pour décider des contestations dont l'objet dépasserait même 5000 piastres. Dans le cas de sentence arbitrale, les parties renonceront à tout appel.

4. Les tribunaux du sandjak n'auront qu'une chambre civile composée d'un président et de deux juges, magistrats diplômés (dont l'un musulman et l'autre chrétien), nommée par le gouverneur général. Les tribunaux du sandjak connaîtront en première instance des affaires civiles ou commerciales dépassant 5000 piastres et en appel des jugements rendus par les juges de paix en matière civile ou commerciale.

5. Les sections criminelles des tribunaux du sandjak seront remplacées par des cours d'assises ambulantes. Ces cours d'assises seront composées d'un magistrat président, choisi par la Cour d'Appel dont relève le tribunal du sandjak parmi les membres de cette cour, et de deux membres désignés par la même Cour d'Appel parmi les juges de paix du sandjak, dont l'un musulman et l'autre chrétien.

6. La Cour d'Assises siégera tour-à-tour dans tous les cazas où sa présence sera reconnu nécessaire.

7. Il y aura un juge d'instruction dans chaque caza. En arrivant au caza, le Président de la Cour d'Assises se fera remettre par le juge d'instruction un état des causes instruites susceptibles de lui être déférées immédiatement et un état des causes en cours d'instruction. S'il constate, au sujet de ces dernières quelque irrégularité ou des lenteurs non motivés, il adressera immédiatement un rapport au Président de la Cour d'Appel.

⁽⁹⁾ [v. A. & P., (1880), LXXXII, (C. 2704), pp. 23-4. cp. Hertslet: *Map of Europe by Treaty*, Vol. IV, p. 2991.]

8. La Cour d'Assises connaîtra, en appel, des jugements rendus par les juges de paix en matière de délits. Elle connaîtra en première et dernière instance des crimes, ainsi que des délits entraînant une peine de plus de 500 piastres d'amende ou de plus de 3 mois de prison.

9. Il y aura au moins six cours d'appel. Chaque cour d'appel est composée d'un Président, magistrat diplômé, nommé par le Gouverneur Général et d'un nombre de chambres suffisant pour connaître des affaires civiles qui lui seront dévolues en appel et pour fournir des présidents aux cours d'assises ambulantes. La cour d'appel est régulièrement constituée dès qu'elle réunit deux membres et un Président. Elle comprend en outre un Procureur Général et un nombre suffisant de procureurs et de substituts.

10. Des tribunaux de commerce seront installés dans les localités où le besoin s'en fera sentir. Dans les endroits où ils fonctionneront, les tribunaux civils ne connaîtront pas des affaires commerciales.

11. La compétence des tribunaux du Chéri sera nettement définie et le Gouverneur Général veillera à ce qu'ils n'empiètent pas sur les attributions des autres tribunaux de la Province. Les juges du Chéri ne pourront cumuler leurs fonctions avec celles des Présidents ou membres des autres tribunaux de la Province.

XI.

1. Un corps de police et un corps de gendarmerie seront créés dans la Province. Ces corps seront recrutés par moitié parmi les habitants musulmans et chrétiens de la Province.

2. L'organisation et le haut commandement de ces corps seront confiées à des officiers européens au service de la Turquie.

3. Des gardes champêtres seront institués dans les nahiés. Ils seront nommés par les conseils des nahiés et placés sous les ordres des Mudirs.

XII.

1. Les recrues domiciliées dans la Province y feront en temps de paix leur service militaire.

2. Les régiments de la cavalerie légère kurde (ex-Hamidiés) seront licenciés.

XIII.

1. Les fonctionnaires de l'administration et les juges de la Province seront choisis, en nombre égal, parmi les musulmans et les chrétiens.

2. Lors de la répartition des postes des gouverneurs de sandjak (mutessarifs), et de kaza (kaimakams) on devra prendre en considération les chiffres des différents groupements ethniques ainsi que l'importance de leurs intérêts économiques.

XIV.

Seuls les habitants sédentaires jouiront des droits d'élection et d'éligibilité.

XV.

1. Les lois, décrets, ordonnances, circulaires et avis officiels destinés à être publiés dans la Province seront rédigés dans les trois principales langues de la province (turc, arménien, kurde).

2. Les requêtes, pétitions et toutes les pièces qui doivent être remises aux autorités administratives ou judiciaires seront rédigées dans l'une de ces trois langues principales, au choix des intéressés.

3. Devant les tribunaux les plaidoiries pourront être faites, au choix des intéressés, dans leur propre langue.

4. Les sentences des tribunaux seront libellées en langue turque et accompagnées d'une traduction dans la langue des parties.

XVI.

1. Chaque nation de la province a le droit de créer et d'administrer des écoles privées de tout degré.
2. Elle pourra établir des taxes spéciales sur les membres de la nation en vue de pourvoir aux besoins de ses écoles.
3. L'enseignement dans les écoles privées se fera dans la langue nationale.
4. La haute surveillance de ces écoles appartient au Gouverneur Général qui l'exercera en conformité avec les règles posées par le Statut Organique de la Province.
5. L'enseignement de la langue turque sera obligatoire dans les écoles privées.

XVII.

Une Commission spéciale présidée par le Gouverneur Général déterminera les conditions dans lesquelles les arméniens dont les terres ont été usurpées en obtiendront, soit la restitution, soit la contrevaletur, en numéraire ou en terres.

XVIII.

L'inviolabilité des droits et privilèges découlant pour la nation arménienne du Sahmanatroutioun (status [*sic*: statut] organique, Young vol. II, p. 80)⁽¹⁰⁾ de 1863 et des bérats octroyés par les Sultans est formellement reconnue.

XIX.

Il ne devra pas être installés de muhadjirs sur le territoire de la province.

XX.

Des dispositions spéciales, conformes à l'esprit des principes ci-dessus énoncés, seront élaborées pour améliorer le sort des Arméniens habitants hors des limites de la Province et spécialement en Cilicie.

XXI.

Une commission composée des délégués du gouvernement ottoman et des puissances élaborera le Statut Organique de la province, ainsi que les dispositions mentionnées à l'article XX, en s'inspirant des principes énoncés dans cet avant projet.

XXII.

Les Puissances s'assureront de l'exécution de toutes ces dispositions.
Constantinople, Juin 1913.

MINUTES.

This is the Russian project which is to form the basis of discussion between the Six Ambassadors.

As it is only a draft and is sure to be considerably modified it seems unnecessary to discuss it in detail.

We might however at once authorize Sir G. Lowther to do this with his colleagues.
(See 28884.⁽¹¹⁾)

H. N.
June 24, 1913.
R. P. M.

⁽¹⁰⁾ [G. Young: *Corps de Droit Ottoman*, Vol. II (Clarendon Press, 1905)]

⁽¹¹⁾ [In his telegram (No. 297) of June 24, 1913, D. 11 A.M., R. 11.45 A.M., Sir G. Lowther stated that his colleagues had received instructions to discuss reforms on the basis of the Russian draft and asked if he were authorized to join them. On June 26, Sir Edward Grey sent a telegram (No. 287), D. 2 P.M., replying "Yes." (F.O. 28884/19208/13/44.)]

He has since been so authorized. This scheme of course only applies to Armenian Reform. Art[icle] II recommends that the Governor Gen[era]l shall be a Christian Ottoman subject or "preferably a European nominated by the Sultan."

If he is a European Russia will want him to be a Russian which will hardly do, but I think we may leave this to others—to raise.

L. M.

A. N.

This is all very well for Armenia, but as soon as progress is made with this the Ambassadors will have to consider reforms for Asiatic Turkey as a whole.

E. G.

No. 516.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 28269/19208/13/44.

Tel. (No. 269.)

Foreign Office, June 19, 1913, 10.50 P.M.

French Ambassador has communicated telegram from French Gov[ernmen]t⁽²⁾ stating that, as it is to be feared that drafting of reforms for Armenia will take some time and that massacres may take place in the six vilayets after the demobilisation of the Turkish army, the six Powers should make a collective representation at Constantinople with a view to secure the immediate appointment by the Sultan of an Imperial High Commissioner with the more extended powers to go to Armenia to maintain order and be responsible for the security of the country.

The High Commissioner's mission would be temporary and exceptional and his mandate limited to the maintenance of order and security. The programme of reforms to be applied to Armenia would remain quite distinct from this mission.

I have told M. Cambon that I will support his proposal if it is made to all the Powers and you may join your five colleagues in this representation if they are all instructed to make it.⁽³⁾

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to St. Petersburg (No. 463); to Berlin (No. 217); to Vienna (No. 185); to Rome (No. 186); to Paris (No. 242).]

⁽²⁾ [*v. D.D.F.*, 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VII, pp. 140-1, No. 131.]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. ibid.*, p. 151, No. 140, and note ⁽²⁾.]

No. 517.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.

F.O. 28269/19208/13/44.

Tel. (No. 465.)

Foreign Office, June 20, 1913, 2.10 P.M.

My telegram No. 269 to Sir G. Lowther (of June 20: High Commissioner for Armenia).⁽¹⁾

You should inform Russian Gov[ernmen]t of our attitude.

⁽¹⁾ [The telegram was despatched on June 19. *v.* immediately preceding document.]

No. 518.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 27953/19208/13/44.

Tel. (No. 468.)

*Foreign Office, June 20, 1913, 7 P.M.*Sir G. Lowther's tel[egram] No. 286.⁽²⁾

Please propose to M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] that he sh[oul]d instruct Russian Amba[ssado]r at Con[stantino]ple to invite his five colleagues to meet and discuss a project based on that of 1895. It w[oul]d be undesirable that the three Amba[ssado]rs sh[oul]d present to their colleagues a D[ra]ft project as being one already finally settled by them, as it might complicate matters, create misunderstandings, and provoke rival suggestions. But as Russia has taken the initiative Russian Ambassador might himself propose the draft for general discussion.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Paris (No. 245), with the addition (No. 246): "Please ask M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] to send similar instructions"; to Constantinople (No. 272), "for information only." *cp. D.D.F., 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VII, pp. 185-6, No. 171, and note* ⁽¹⁾.]

⁽²⁾ [Not reproduced. Sir G. Lowther's telegram (No. 286) of June 18, 1913, D. 1.20 P.M., R. 3.25 P.M., referred to Sir G. Buchanan's telegram (No. 220) of June 16 (*v. supra*, p. 452, No. 511), and to Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 457) to St. Petersburg (*v. supra*, p. 453, No. 512) and stated further that he had no cognisance of any definite Turkish scheme (F.O. 27953/19208/13/44).]

No. 519.

Memorandum by Sir A. Nicolson.

F.O. 29168/19208/13/44.

Sir E. Grey,

Foreign Office, June 20, 1913.

C[oun]t Benckendorff showed me a telegram to-day stating that the Russian Gov[ernmen]t, in reply to the French proposal regarding the appointment of a High Commissioner for Armenia,⁽¹⁾ have said that they think that the idea should in the first place be examined by the three R[ep]R[esentative]s at Constantinople. The Russian Gov[ernmen]t really doubt if the proposal is a practical one, and the experience of Chakri Pasha's nomination is not encouraging (I am afraid I have forgotten this event). Moreover it is a half measure, which Turkey would accept and then find excuses for not doing anything further.

A. N.

MINUTE.

Then we must agree to this preliminary examination of the idea, if the French do so, but we must wait for the French view of the proposal.⁽²⁾ It is clear that the Russians wish to keep proposals about Armenia in their own hands.

E. G.

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 460, No. 516.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. infra*, p. 463, No. 522, *encl.*]

No. 520.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾*St. Petersburg, June 21, 1913.*

F.O. 28492/19208/13/44.

D. 8.1 P.M.

Tel. (No. 227.)

R. 10 P.M.

Your telegram No. 269 of June 19⁽²⁾ to Constantinople.

Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs has informed M. Pichon that if he really thinks that appointment of High Commissioner will be of use he (Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs) will support proposal. But he has reminded the French Minister for Foreign Affairs that this expedient was tried on occasion of massacres in 1895, and was productive of no good results.⁽³⁾

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Berlin (as No. 218); to Vienna (as No. 186); to Rome (as No. 183); to Constantinople (as No. 276); to Paris (by bag). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 460, No. 516.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. D.D.F.*, 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VII, p. 151, No. 140.]

No. 521.

*Communication from Count Benckendorff of June 23, 1913.**Count Benckendorff to M. Sazonov.*

F.O. 28800/19208/13/44.

Tel.

Le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères me dit qu'il croit qu'il y a malentendu sur le sens de l'aide-mémoire.⁽¹⁾ Il me dit que le Gouvernement Allemand ayant proposé que le Gouvernement Turc soit représenté à la Conférence des Ambassadeurs, il devient difficile de refuser de prendre connaissance du projet de réformes déjà élaboré par la Turquie; que pareil refus rendrait difficile l'accord nécessaire de toutes les Puissances.

Le projet de Sir Edward Grey consiste à informer le Gouvernement Turc que les Ambassadeurs sont chargés d'élaborer un projet de réformes et qu'ils prendront comme base le projet élaboré en 1895. Simultanément la Sublime Porte serait à informer que si le Gouvernement Turc désire soumettre un projet élaboré par lui, les Puissances n'y voient pas d'obstacles et examineront si le projet Turc peut être mis en harmonie avec les bases de 1895.

⁽¹⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp. 452-3, Nos. 511-2.]

No. 522.

Mr. Carnegie to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 28831/19208/13/44.

(No. 337.)

Paris, D. June 23, 1913.

Sir,

R. June 24, 1913.

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith, with reference to my telegram No. 82 of the 21st instant,⁽²⁾ copy of a memorandum from the Minister for Foreign

⁽¹⁾ [A copy of this despatch was sent to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [Mr. Carnegie's telegram (No. 82), D. June 21, by post, R. June 22, 1913, noon, is not reproduced. He had been told by the Political Director that "instructions would be sent to French Ambassador at St. Petersburg similar to those" sent to Sir G. Buchanan by Sir Edward Grey. (F.O. 28831/19208/13/44.) *cp. supra*, p. 461, No. 518.]

Affairs informing me that His Excellency is in complete agreement with your views in regard to the project of reforms for the Armenian vilayets, and that instructions will be sent to the French Ambassador at St. Petersburg similar to those transmitted to Sir George Buchanan in your telegram No. 468 of the 20th instant.⁽³⁾

I have, &c.

LANCELOT D. CARNEGIE.

Enclosure in No. 522.

M. Pichon to Sir F. Bertie.

Paris, le 21 juin, 1913.

Par une note en date de ce jour,⁽¹⁾ le Chargé d'Affaires de Sa Majesté britannique à Paris a bien voulu signaler à Monsieur Pichon les objections que verrait Sir Ed[ward] Grey à la présentation collective par les ambassadeurs de France, de la Grande-Bretagne et de Russie à Constantinople d'un projet de réformes dans les provinces arméniennes de la Turquie asiatique. Il a paru au principal Secrétaire d'État pour les affaires étrangères qu'en vue de prévenir toute interprétation erronée et de regrettables malentendus, il serait préférable que le gouvernement russe, qui a pris l'initiative du projet en question, chargeât son ambassadeur à Constantinople de soumettre seul aux représentants des grandes Puissances le travail qui a été officieusement préparé sur la base du projet de 1895.

Monsieur Pichon s'empresse d'informer l'Honorable L. D. Carnegie qu'il partage entièrement sur ce point la manière de voir de Sir Ed[ward] Grey et qu'il ne manquera pas de donner à l'ambassadeur de la République à St. Pétersbourg des instructions identiques à celles que Sir George Buchanan a reçues sur ce sujet du gouvernement britannique.

⁽³⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 461, No. 518.]

⁽⁴⁾ [v. *D.D.F.*, 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VII, pp. 185-6, No. 171.]

No. 523.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 29196/19208/13/44

(No. 203.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, June 24, 1913.

The German Ambassador spoke to me to-day⁽²⁾ of the German desire to see that Turkish authority was strengthened in Asia Minor and that the reforms for Armenia were handled with that end in view. The German Government thought that the Turkish Government should be represented at the consultation of the Ambassadors in Constantinople; but M. Sazonof was opposed to this.

I said that I had suggested that, as, finally, the reforms must be accepted by Turkey, it would obviously be necessary for Turkey to be consulted at some stage. It would perhaps be desirable that the Ambassadors should themselves agree upon a scheme, taking the reforms of 1895 as the basis for discussion, and then, when they were agreed about a scheme, take Turkey into consultation on the subject. There was an idea that the Turks had already drawn up a scheme of reforms themselves, and if so it would be discourteous to them to ignore their scheme. I thought, therefore, that the Ambassadors might inform the Turkish Government that they were beginning to discuss amongst themselves the question of reforms for Armenia, and invite the Turks

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

⁽²⁾ [v. *G.P.*, XXXVIII, p. 79.]

to send them any scheme of reforms of their own, if they had one ready, so that it might be taken into consideration. If the Turks did send some-thing, it could be considered in connection with the scheme of 1895, which was the basis for discussion; but whether the Turks sent any-thing or not the Ambassadors could proceed with their discussion of the 1895 scheme and, when they were agreed, consult the Porte as to giving effect to it.

The Ambassador thought this a reasonable procedure.

[I am, &c.]
E. G[REY].

No. 524.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

St. Petersburg, June 26, 1913.

F.O. 29348/19208/13/44.

D. 2.45 P.M.

Tel. (No. 232.)

R. 5.25 P.M.

Your despatch No. 221.⁽²⁾

I handed to Minister for Foreign Affairs yesterday note embodying your instructions.

His Excellency received it unfavourably, saying that he did not like our having taken definite engagement with regard to British officers asked for.

I replied that it was impossible for you to have acted otherwise; that we had no desire to poach in Russian preserves, but that it was indispensable to organise force capable of maintaining order and preventing massacres till general reform scheme was adopted, and that without it the High Commissioner whom the French Government had proposed would be powerless for good.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs said that he did not wish to quarrel with us about this question, but that it must be distinctly understood that the appointment of the officers was to be provisional, and that their number must be limited.

He will not, I think, consent to more than five or six, and, though he did not actually say so, would much prefer that they should not be taken from the Indian army.

⁽¹⁾ [Copies of this telegram were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 453-4, No. 513.]

No. 525.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Carnegie.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 29558/9085/13/44.

(No. 406.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, June 26, 1913.

During the conversation with M. Cambon and M. Pichon this morning,⁽²⁾ I said that Germany seemed to hesitate between two policies about Asiatic Turkey: her first idea had been the integrity of Asiatic Turkey, possibly guaranteed by the Powers, and the consolidation and support of Turkish authority; latterly she had talked

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

⁽²⁾ [The visit of M. Poincaré and M. Pichon to London took place on June 24-27. For further reference, *v. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II), pp. 869-70, No. 1088; p. 871, No. 1090, and *note* ⁽¹⁾. *cp. also D.D.F.*, 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VII, pp. 252-3, No. 233, and *note* ⁽¹⁾.]

somewhat vaguely about spheres of interest. This second policy would lead to a partition of Asiatic Turkey and a complete disappearance of Turkish power.⁽³⁾

M. Pichon said that the first policy was the one to be entirely preferred.

I agreed, and said that to make it effective there would have to be reforms agreed upon by the Powers, and financial assistance based upon proper financial organisation. If Turkey was to be re-established, she must not be burdened with a heavy indemnity. Sir Arthur Nicolson and I pointed out to M. Pichon and M. Cambon how untenable the position would be in Parliament here if we agreed to an increase of Turkish Customs Dues which would be levied greatly upon British trade and which would go, not to the good government and development of Asiatic Turkey from which an increase of trade would result, but as an indemnity to the Balkan States, who were going to increase the Customs Dues in the territory that they had annexed.

M. Pichon entirely agreed, and said that in the French Parliament there would be the same difficulty.

M. Cambon said that Russia had talked much too emphatically about an indemnity, and he had pointed this out to M. Raffalovich, the Russian Delegate to the Financial Commission in Paris.

M. Pichon gave it to be understood that the clear expression of our views in opposition to an indemnity had been welcome in Paris. The position of France in the matter was a difficult one, owing to her relations with Russia.

I am, &c.

E. G[REY].

⁽³⁾ [Sir Edward Grey spoke in similar terms to Count Benckendorff on June 27, 1913, *v Siebert-Benckendorff*, Vol. III, p. 197.]

No. 526.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 30094/19208/13/44.

(No. 208.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, June 27, 1913.

I told the German Ambassador to-day,⁽²⁾ with regard to the visit to London of the President of the French Republic, that, as far as general politics were concerned, the speeches that had been made by the King and the President represented entirely what our conversations had been. All our talk on general politics had been on the lines of these speeches, in the tone and spirit of them. In fact, I had never had conversations that were more peaceful in tendency.

We had discussed certain specific questions of the moment. Our first pre-occupation had been the danger of war between the Balkan Allies themselves, and on this we had found ourselves in complete agreement that all our efforts should be devoted to localising the war. I had suggested that, if this was to be done, it would be necessary to have an understanding that nothing that happened in a war between the Allies was to upset the decisions already come to by the Great Powers about Albania. I found that the French view agreed with this.

Respecting Asiatic Turkey, I had observed that there were two possible courses. One was to consolidate the remaining Turkish dominions and to put Turkey on her feet. This would require reforms, including financial organisation, and also assistance from financiers. I had pointed out that, for this purpose, the International Financial Commission in Paris should avoid placing impossible burdens upon Turkey. The other course was a division of Asiatic Turkey into spheres of interest. This would

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. G.P.*, XXXVIII, pp. 85-6.]

lead to partition and to the complete disappearance of the Turkish Empire. I found that the French Government agreed that the first of these courses was entirely preferable to the other.

I said to the German Ambassador that I imagined that, on these two questions: of localising the war between the Allies, if war broke out between them, and of making it our object to preserve the Asiatic dominions of Turkey, the German Government would be in agreement with us.

The Ambassador entirely concurred. He said that Herr Gwinner had talked too much in London about spheres of interest in Asiatic Turkey. It was perhaps natural for any one concerned as he was with special interests in special parts to talk in this way, but he had said more than was desirable. The view of the German Government was that every effort should be made to maintain the Turkish dominions, and not to divide them. Of course, if Turkish authority did collapse altogether, Germany would have special interests to preserve. The Ambassador went on to say that the Arabs seemed to be rather restless, and an Arab Chief from Nejd had already made advances to the Germans, apparently on the assumption that Turkish rule was being broken up; but the Germans had declined to entertain his advances. Amongst other things, they regarded Nejd as a place where there would naturally be British interests.

I said that we also had had advances of the same sort made to us from Chiefs, I thought more in the region of Busra and the Persian Gulf; but we had not encouraged them, because they presupposed a break-up of Turkish authority. Amongst other things, it would give great offence to Moslem opinion in British territory if we took part in a policy of destroying the Turkish Government and dividing its territory.

In the course of the conversation the Ambassador expressed cordial appreciation of the King's speech at the Banquet to M. Poincaré,⁽³⁾ and on my remarking that I thought he ought to be satisfied also with the speeches of M. Poincaré especially with such things as he said at the Guildhall the Ambassador concurred.

[I am, &c.]
E. G[REY].

(3) [*v. The Times*, June 26, 1913.]

No. 527.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.

F.O. 29348/19208/13/44.

Tel. (No. 483.)

Foreign Office, June 28, 1913, 4.20 P.M.

Your telegram No. 282.⁽¹⁾

Your language approved. You can explain to M. Sazonow that only 6 or 7 officers will be selected and that their appointments will be provisional and that they can be absorbed in general scheme of reforms when one has been elaborated and put into force.

(1) [*v. supra*, p. 464, No. 524.]

[*ED. NOTE.*—On June 28, 1913, Tewfik Pasha communicated a memorandum on reforms. (F.O. 29569/19208/13/44.) It is not reproduced as it is identical in substance with the circular telegram printed *infra*, pp. 475–6, No. 538, *encl. 2*. A summary appeared in *The Times* of July 3, 1913. *cp. also G.P.*, XXXVIII, pp. 82–3; *D.D.F.*, 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VII, p. 247, No. 229, *note* (2).]

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 29728/19208, 13 44.

St. Petersburg, D. June 29, 1913, 11.40 P.M.

Tel. (No. 238.)

R. June 30, 1913, 9 A.M.

Minister came to see me to-day, and said that military authorities were raising strong objections to appointment of British officers in part of Turkey adjoining Russian frontier in which Russia was most interested. He hoped, therefore, that you would not insist on it. I communicated to him substance of your telegram No. 483 of 28th June.⁽²⁾ and tried to overcome his objections, but without success. His Excellency suggested that best way out of it would be for you to inform Ottoman Government that officers had been selected, and would be sent out when once general scheme of reforms had been elaborated.

I pointed out that years might elapse before this was done, and that disorders might break out in the meantime, while it was always possible that Turkey might veto employment of Russian officers.

His Excellency replied that Turkey could not object to appointment of Russian officers to work together with British, and perhaps French officers, and that appointment of half a dozen British officers in the meantime could not prevent outbreak of disorders. You might, he added, explain that it was impossible for His Majesty's Government to take separate action now that general scheme of reform was under consideration by the Powers.

MINUTES

I think we have gone too far to retreat.

We have given our word to the Turks and M. Sazonoff has accepted, though with reluctance, the situation on the understanding that the appointments are only provisional.

If we wait till the reform scheme is working the whole point of the appointments will vanish as they were intended to tide over the interval. It is of course obvious that 7 officers are not enough but apart from the fact that the Turks did not ask for more in this particular dep[artmen]t M. Sazonoff himself has insisted that their numbers should be limited (so the objection comes ill from him).

(The Turks will never ask for Russian officers and will only accept them if forced to do so, though they might put up with Frenchmen.)

If we act as M. Sazonoff wishes there will soon be massacres of Armenians on a large scale. Public opinion here, the other Powers and Turkey herself will justly lay the blame on us while the Turks in the meanwhile will naturally get from Germany all—and more than—we have refused to give them.

M. Sazonoff is being pressed by the military party and I think we might strengthen his hand against them by using some of the above arguments—not perhaps the parts in brackets which he would not like though the objection of the Turks to Russian officers is by no means the least difficult element of the situation.

H. N.

June 30, 1913.

R. P. M.

M. Sazonov has put us in a great difficulty in this matter. The Russian pretensions are quite untenable and by admitting them, we admit a sort of Russian sphere of influence.

But if we insist, we run the risk of provoking action by the military authorities who might send Russian officers to the country.

I do not see why we should not reply that we cannot now refuse to send the officers but that we would gladly see them associated with French and Russian officers. How far into the provinces does the Russian caveat extend? Might we not enquire this point. Are Van, Bitlis, Diarbekir included. The British officers might refrain from visiting Erzerum.

(1) [Copies of this despatch were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

(2) [v. immediately preceding document.]

Perhaps I prefer the alternative of a mixed force, because we avoid making any admission in that way.

L. M.

June 30.

Perhaps the Sec[retar]y of State would like to speak on this to Sir L. Mallet and myself to-morrow (Tuesday).

A. N.

No. 529.

Sir G. Louther to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Constantinople, June 30, 1913.

F.O. 30028/19208/13/44.

D. 4.25 P.M.

Tel. (No. 304.)

R. 5.55 P.M.

Armenia.

The first meeting of Ambassadors was held this morning, and it was decided to refer the proposals enclosed in my despatch No. 545⁽²⁾ to a committee of secretaries and dragomans of the embassies.⁽³⁾

The Russian Ambassador explained that the proposals were his own personal production, and must not be taken as a formal proposal of his Government.

The Turkish Government is preparing a scheme of reforms to be carried out under European supervision, and will shortly communicate it to the embassies officially with a request for support.⁽⁴⁾

⁽¹⁾ [Copies of this telegram were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 454-9, No. 515, and *encl.*]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. infra*, pp. 504-15, No. 567, and *note* ⁽¹⁾, and *encl.*]

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 466, *Ed. note.*]

No. 530.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.

F.O. 29728/19208/13/44.

Tel. (No. 486.)

Foreign Office, July 1, 1913, 4.30 P.M.

Your tel[egram] No. 238 of June 29.⁽¹⁾

We cannot refuse to lend officers at Turkish request without becoming in some degree responsible, if massacres occur before reform scheme is completed and in operation. We have no objection whatever to British officers being associated with Russian or others and have expressly limited the number of officials we are prepared to lend to Turkey in order that we may not monopolize the administration. M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] should not therefore ask us to refuse to lend limited number of officers that we propose, but if he fears that British officers may monopolize administration and make a sort of British secteur in districts adjoining Russian frontier and if he desires employment of Russian or French officers he should take his own action at Constantinople.

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 467, No. 528.]

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

St. Petersburg, July 1, 1913.

F.O. 30201.19208.13/41.

D. 6.30 P.M.

Tel. (No. 240.)

R. 9 P.M.

My telegram No. 238 of June 29.⁽²⁾

I have now received a note from Minister for Foreign Affairs drawing attention to special interest for Russia of condition of things in the six vilayets adjoining Russian frontier, and stating that Russian Ambassador in London has been instructed to point out to you that, if request of Porte cannot be refused, Russian Government earnestly hope that Turkish Government may be informed that officers can be employed anywhere except in the six vilayets.

As regards fear that Porte may then apply to Germany, Minister for Foreign Affairs states that he proposes to instruct their representative at Constantinople to forestall such an eventuality by informing the Porte that Russia would categorically oppose employment of foreign officers in these vilayets before Powers have agreed on the plan of reforms to be carried out.

Note concludes by expression of special value attached to solidarity of views between the two Governments.

MINUTES.

What M. Sazonoff asks us to do, in effect, is to refuse the request of the Porte, who want to start their reforms precisely in these seven vilayets (not six) only two of which actually touch the Russian frontier. It is of no use to offer them officers for other places now, though they have asked us to let them have some eventually.

If the Russians act as suggested in the second paragraph they will be primarily responsible for any massacres which may take place because it is obvious that no scheme of reforms can be ready for some months, let alone in practical working. Such action would also make an end of the co-operation of the Powers in preparing a scheme of reforms for I feel sure that Germany would not allow Turkey to be dictated to in this manner.

Perhaps when Count Benckendorff approaches the subject it may be possible to make some impression on him.

H. N.

July 2, 1913.

This telegram has crossed Sir E Grey's telegram No. 486 of yesterday.⁽³⁾

R. P. M.

July 2.

The Russians ask us to abstain from sending officers to the 6 (or 7) Vilayets of Eastern and Northern Anatolia pending the adoption of a reform scheme.

The Turks asked us to send them to 3 secteurs—1. Eastern Anatolia. 2. Northern Anatolia and 3. Smyrna, Broussa and Constantinople.

The minutes show that it was not thought advisable to send officers to the 3rd secteur (see 23481⁽⁴⁾) and the W[ar] O[ffice] were so informed June 16⁽⁵⁾ but apparently an answer had already been returned to Tewfik Pasha accepting for the 3 secteurs (see 21451⁽⁶⁾). This is not of great importance, as the 3rd secteur is already provided with foreign officers and the real necessity is limited to E[astern] and N[orthern] Anatolia.

The Russian communication therefore amounts to a summons to withdraw our acceptance of the Turkish request—I do not think that we can comply for the reason that the matter has already gone too far and we should be put in very awkward position as regards Turkey. M. Sazonov consented moreover to the provisional employment of British officers⁽⁷⁾ and he

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Paris (by bag); to Berlin (as No. 233); to Constantinople (as No. 298). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 467, No. 523.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. immediately preceding document.*]

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 435, No. 487, and *min.*]

⁽⁵⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 453, No. 513, note ⁽²⁾.]

⁽⁶⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 431, No. 481.]

⁽⁷⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 464, No. 524.]

cannot now go back upon his word. If we comply, we shall be held responsible for any massacres which may occur. A rumour has reached us that very serious disorders have just taken place.

Moreover, if we leave reforms in Armenia to Russia, we shall never have any. M. Sazonov may be sincere but the Military and local authorities who are dictating to him now will see that disorders continue in those provinces—witness the recent visit of the Russian Consul. They will be glad when the moment arrives of an opportunity of intervention. I think we should seek a frank explanation with M. Sazonov; is he sincere in desiring the restoration of order and in maintaining the strength and integrity of Turkey? If so, a policy of real reform is absolutely essential and we can work wholeheartedly with him in the pursuit of this object. We have no political aims in E[astern] and N[orthern] Anatolia—our only aim is the maintenance of order. Do the Russian G[overnment] really object to our cooperation in this work? If so, we shall have to state in Parli[amen]t in answer to the many questions that we are standing aside entirely pending the adoption of a reform scheme.

It would be well to know, however, if when a reform scheme is adopted the Russians are committed to national secessions. It was a point specially brought to M. Sazonov's notice by Sir G. Buchanan on his return and M. Sazonov expressed his entire concurrence in your view which was unfavourable to National secessions, on the ground that Turkey would not accept them and that they would tend to the partition of the Asiatic Provinces, to which you are opposed.⁽⁸⁾ Has he now changed his mind?

Would M. Sazonov accept a scheme under which the execution of reforms was entrusted to the officials of a minor neutral power? This might provide a solution.

I would suggest discussing this with Count Benckendorff. Even if M. Sazonov agrees to the compromise proposed by you yesterday.⁽⁹⁾ I think that we should have a frank exchange of views with the Russian Gov[er]nment in order to ensure harmonious action.

L. M.

I do not see any harm (and I said so to Tewfik P[ash]a—see my record of today) in no British officer being employed in the Vilayets (two I believe) adjoining the Russian frontier—I quite understand Russian susceptibilities on that point—we sh[oul]d have the same—but we cannot now decline to supply them for vilayets not adjoining the Russian frontier and we sh[oul]d maintain our ground on this.

A. N.

Sir A. Nicolson

Bring up tomorrow with Sir L. Mallet.

E. G.

2.7.13.

⁽⁸⁾ [cp. *supra*, No. 452, No. 511.]

⁽⁹⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

No. 532.

Sir E. Goschen to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Berlin, July 2, 1913.

F.O. 30386/19208/13/44.

Tel. (No. 92.)

D. 1.45 P.M.

R. 2.35 P.M.

S[ecretary] of S[tate] for F[oreign] A[ffairs] told me to-day that Russian proposal for making Armenia autonomous province filled him with anxiety. It would, he thought, be the beginning of the end and would (group omitted: ? lead to) eventual partition. The Imperial Government honestly wanted to maintain the integrity of the Turkish Asiatic possessions intact, but of course, if it came to partition, Germany would have to claim her share.

MINUTE.

The German M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] is perfectly right and I think we should reply that H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] are equally opposed to any proposal which would lead to the partition of Turkey and that they consider that it is essential to secure the co-operation of Turkey in carrying out reforms.⁽²⁾

L. M.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Paris (by bag); to St. Petersburg (as No. 496); to Constantinople (as No. 297). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [v. *infra*, p. 479, No. 537.]

No. 533.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Constantinople, July 2, 1913.

F.O. 30397/19208/13/44.

D. 5.40 P.M.

Tel. (No. 309.)

R. 6.50 P.M.

Reform scheme. Sir G. Lowther's Tel[egram] No. 304 of June 30.⁽²⁾

I have received *note verbale* with Turkish scheme, and am sending copy by messenger to-morrow.⁽³⁾

Scheme embraces whole Empire, not Armenian provinces only, as contemplated in Russian proposals. I have some reason to believe that German and Austrian Ambassadors will nevertheless endeavour at next meeting to make Turkish scheme basis of discussion, in which case I propose to adopt attitude that, without further instructions from you, I cannot go beyond scope of Russian proposals.

Russian Ambassador seems disposed to press on with his scheme.

(Confidential.)

In conversation with me, both Austrian and German Ambassadors have constantly dwelt on danger of allowing Russia to create Russian sphere in North-East Asia Minor, and have indicated their intention, in that eventuality, of endeavouring to obtain appointment of an Englishman to carry out reforms, obviously in the hope of creating friction between ourselves and Russia.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Berlin (as No. 227); to Vienna (as No. 198); to St. Petersburg (as No. 492). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 468, No. 529.]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 466, *Ed. note*, and *infra*, pp. 474-9, No. 538, *encls.*]

No. 534.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Constantinople, July 2, 1913.

F.O. 30398/19208/13/44.

D. 5.40 P.M.

Tel. (No. 310.)

R. 9.10 P.M.

My telegram No. 309 of July 2.⁽²⁾

Turkish *note verbale* contains three enclosures⁽³⁾: (1) Circular telegram to Ottoman Ambassadors, recounting measures already taken for administrative reform; (2) Bill supplementing recent law on vilayets (Sir G. Lowther's despatches Nos. 228 and 300⁽⁴⁾); and (3) orders defining powers of inspectors-general.

In its main lines Turkish scheme provides for grouping of vilayets in secteurs, each secteur having an inspector-general, who in more important, *e.g.*, eastern vilayets will be a foreigner, and is appointed by Council of Ministers for five years. Although

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Paris (by bag); to Berlin (as No. 226); to Vienna (as No. 197); to St. Petersburg (as No. 491). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. immediately preceding document*]

⁽³⁾ [*v. infra*, pp. 474-9, No. 538, and *encls.*]

⁽⁴⁾ [Not reproduced. Sir G. Lowther's despatch (No. 228), D. March 22, R. March 26, 1913, described the "provisional law *re* the separation of provincial from Imperial finance" published in the *Official Gazette* of March 11. (F.O. 13761/13761/13/44.) His despatch (No. 300), D. April 12, R. April 16, 1913, commented at length on the further provisional law published in the *Official Gazette* of March 28. This dealt with the whole question of provincial administration. (F.O. 17400/13761/13/44.)]

field of their activities is wide, powers of the inspectors-general are really limited by their being under obligation to consult valis on all important questions, and in all cases of dispute with Central Government are subjected to decisions of the Council of Ministers.

MINUTES.

It would be far better to begin with a scheme of this kind than to force a scheme upon Turkey which is unacceptable to her and would certainly lead to the occupation of the Armenian Provinces by Russia.

I think we should state our views quite plainly to the Russian G[overnmen]t or we shall risk a very serious misunderstanding

L. M.

(See No. 30399.⁽⁵⁾)A. N.
E. G.

(3) [v. immediately succeeding document.]

No. 535.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾*St. Petersburg, July 2, 1913.*

F.O. 30899/19208/13/44.

D. 8.10 P.M.

Tel. (No. 242.)

R. 10 P.M.

Turkish Ambassador read Minister for Foreign Affairs to-day long telegram reciting all that Turkey had already done and proposed to do in the matter of reforms in Asia.

Minister for Foreign Affairs told him that this was not the first time Turkey had announced intention of taking work of reforms in hand as soon as she knew Powers were occupying themselves with the question, but that in spite of this manoeuvre Ambassadors at Constantinople would draw up scheme of reforms which would be communicated to the Porte.

German Ambassador has informed Minister for Foreign Affairs that Russian project, in the opinion of his Government, goes too far, and is calculated to encourage other provinces to demand similar privileges, and that this might lead to dismemberment.

Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs replied that Russia would do all that she could to maintain Turkish integrity in Asia, but that in the vilayets near her frontier she would not put up with half-measures. She must therefore insist on principles laid down in her project, but any modifications that Germany might propose as regards details would receive friendly consideration.

MINUTES.

I agree with the German view. The Russians want to have a Russian Gov[ernor] Gen[era]l of the Armenian provinces. Article 2 of the project of reform (28575)⁽²⁾ provides that the Gov[ernor] Gen[era]l of the Armenian provinces shall be a Christian Ottoman or by preference a European. They propose complete autonomy for the two frontier provinces and this is regarded in Berlin as tantamount to the eventual partition of the Asiatic Provinces. (See Tel[egram] No. 92 from Berlin.⁽³⁾)

I am convinced that it is our policy strenuously to resist any such tendency. Sir V. Chirol told me yesterday that if we stood by and allowed this to happen, the effects in India

(1) [This telegram was sent to Paris (by bag); to Berlin (as No. 228); to Vienna (as No. 199); to Constantinople (as No. 293). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

(2) [v. *supra*, pp. 454-9, No. 515, and *encl.*]

(3) [v. *supra*, p. 470, No. 532.]

would be absolutely disastrous. I think that we should let our views be known quite clearly at St. Petersburg and say that we attach the greatest importance to a fair consideration of the Turkish scheme of reform, because we are convinced that no scheme of reform will be successful which is not accepted by all the Powers as well as by Turkey. That H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] are entirely opposed to any scheme which will tend to the partition of the Asiatic Provinces and that their policy is to maintain the integrity of the Turkish Dominions.

I would communicate these views to the French G[overnment] and ask for their support and repeat Berlin.

L. M.

The project is termed the Russian project but it was drawn up in collaboration with our own and the French Embassy at Const[antino]ple (see 28575),⁽⁴⁾ and we are in part responsible for it—though of course it was merely a draft to serve as a basis for discussion. We sh[oul]d consult with Paris and St. Petersburg. I w[oul]d suggest—

1. A tel[egram] to Sir G. Buchanan repeating Sir E. Goschen's No. 92⁽⁵⁾—and point out that there is much force in German objections and that it w[oul]d be advisable to parry them by not insisting on any species of autonomy, as this may be the prelude to splitting up the Turkish Empire in Asia which we are all anxious to avoid. We also consider that the Turkish project sh[oul]d be seriously considered at Con[stantino]ple by the Ambass[ado]r.
2. Repeat the tel[egram]s to Paris and ask for their views and express hope they will support our observations at St. Petersburg.

A. N.

This is covered by a subsequent draft telegram ⁽⁶⁾

E. G.

Sir E. Grey.

Tel[egram] No. 242 from Sir G. Buchanan reveals a state of mind in M. Sazonov which must wreck any chance of reform and which will probably lead to partition.

Our reason for abandoning the proposal of sending officers to Asiatic Turkey is that the Turks have now put forward a scheme of reforms of their own which must be considered. I would urge that we should make it a condition of assenting to this surrender that the Turkish scheme be given fair and proper consideration and that we should place on record our view that no scheme of reform which is not acceptable to Turkey will stand a chance of success and that we are entirely opposed to any policy which will lead to demands on the part of other Provinces tending to the partition of Turkey. That if the Russian G[overnment] are committed to a policy tending to partition we shall be unable to continue our co-operation.

I think that our general interests demand that we should take a definite line on this subject.

L. M.

July 3.

Seen by Sir E. Grey.

L. M.

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 454-9, No. 515, and *encl.*]

⁽⁵⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 470, No. 532]

⁽⁶⁾ [*v. infra*, pp. 480-1, No. 541.]

No. 536.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

St. Petersburg, July 2, 1913.

F.O. 30400/19208/13/44.

D. 8.10 P.M.

Tel. (No. 243.)

R. 9.10 P.M.

Your telegram No. 486 of July 1.⁽²⁾

I said all I could to induce Minister for Foreign Affairs to withdraw his opposition, but unsuccessfully. He maintained that until general scheme of reforms had been elaborated Russia could not get Turkish consent to appointment of Russian officers

⁽¹⁾ [Copies of this telegram were sent to the India Office; to the War Office.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 468, No. 530.]

without her example being followed by Germany and without compromising success of Ambassadors' conference at Constantinople.

It would be, he thought, better to employ officers of some minor Power, and, if British officers must be sent somewhere, why could they not go to Syria or to some other district of Asia where disorders might break out at any time?

All that I could induce him to do was to say he would consult military authorities again, giving definite answer. I have no hope, however, of that answer being favourable. In course of conversation he remarked that you had placed him in a most difficult position, and that he could not understand how you could have promised to send officers to districts adjoining Russian frontier without first consulting him. Had anyone else done it he would almost have regarded it as an unfriendly act.

No. 537.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 31227/19208/13/14.

(No. 219.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 3, 1913.

The German Ambassador told me to-day that, in the opinion of the German Government, the Russian proposals about Armenia went too far. They went, indeed, beyond even what existed for the Lebanon. They would create a complete autonomy, and separate Armenia entirely from the rest of Asiatic Turkey. This would be a bad precedent, and would make for the break-up and not for the consolidation of the Turkish Dominions. The French proposal that a "Haut Commissaire" should be appointed temporarily for Armenia to prevent massacres while reforms were being discussed⁽²⁾ was one that Germany would agree to, provided that the "Haut Commissaire" chosen was an Ottoman subject taken from Constantinople.

I said that we had not considered who the "Haut Commissaire" should be, but we would agree to the proposal. I had not gone carefully into the Russian proposals, and could not yet express an opinion about them.

I told the Ambassador of the Turkish proposals that had now been put forward, as described in Mr. Marling's telegram no. 310, of to-day.⁽³⁾

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY.]

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 460, No. 516.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 471-2, No. 534. The telegram was dated July 2, 1913.]

No. 538.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 30940/19208/13/44.

(No. 580.)

Sir,

Constantinople, D. July 3, 1913.

R. July 7, 1913.

With reference to my telegram No. 310 of yesterday's date⁽²⁾ I have the honour to transmit to you herewith copy of the Note Verbale from the Sublime Porte containing the Turkish proposals for the reform of the administration of the Empire. There has

⁽¹⁾ [A copy of this despatch was sent to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 471-2, No. 534.]

not yet been time enough to study the scheme in detail, but I may say that there appears to be at least one defect in an essential point in it, i.e. that the Inspectors-General are to be appointed by Turkey so that the guarantee of Europe which is a *sine qua non* in the eyes of the Armenians for the efficacy of the reforms is wanting.

The position of the Inspectors General vis-à-vis of the Valis also is by no means clear.⁽³⁾ The text of the Bill and the règlement would seem to place them in a position of inferiority, but the German Ambassador, who seems to have been constantly discussing the question of reforms with the late Grand Vizier,⁽⁴⁾ asserts that this is not the case and that the Valis will be liable to the control of the Inspectors General.

I have, &c.

CHARLES M. MARLING.

Enclosure 1 in No. 538.

Saïd Halim Pasha to Mr. Marling.

Monsieur le Chargé d'Affaires,

Sublime Porte, le 1^{er} juillet, 1913.

Pour faire suite à ma communication du 29 juin écoulé, No. 84127/73 j'ai l'honneur de transmettre ci-joint à Votre Excellence, à titre d'information, copie de la dépêche adressée aux Représentants Impériaux à l'étranger au sujet des travaux de réformes entrepris par le Cabinet Mahmoud Chevket Pacha et poursuivis par le Cabinet actuel, la traduction des "Articles additionnels à la Loi provisoire sur l'administration générale des Vilayets" ainsi que celle des "Instructions relatives aux devoirs et attributions des Inspecteurs généraux."

Je saisis, &c.

SAÏD HALIM.

Enclosure 2 in No. 538.

Text of Circular Telegram sent to Ottoman Ambassadors.

Le Cabinet de Mahmoud Chevket Pacha avait assumé la responsabilité du pouvoir dans les circonstances très critiques que traversait le pays et tout en s'efforçant de donner aux opérations de guerre une tournure aussi favorable que possible, il n'avait pas manqué d'employer sa plus grande activité à l'exécution des réformes intérieures.

C'est ainsi que conformément à la loi provisoire sur l'administration générale des Vilayets, il a été accordé aux Conseils Généraux le droit de décision pour les affaires d'intérêt local; les budgets des Vilayets ont été séparés, les attributions et les devoirs des fonctionnaires élargis et précisés; les lois sur les justices de paix ainsi que le principe des tribunaux ambulants ont été adoptés en vue de faciliter le jugement des procès de moindre importance qui surgissent fréquemment entre les habitants d'une même localité; des tribunaux judiciaires ont été organisés dans 15 sandjaks en Anatolie et dans cent Cazas dans les provinces orientales; les Cours d'Appel des Vilayets de Bagdad et de Beyrouth ont été divisées en deux; la nomination et la promotion des Naïbs, des juges et des fonctionnaires judiciaires ont été réglementées par une loi; par l'application des lois sur l'hypothèque et le transfert des immeubles, et sur la suppression des guédiks, la circulation de la richesse immobilière a été assurée; par l'application de la loi qui confère le droit de propriété aux personnes morales, la formation des sociétés qui pourront faire des transactions sur les immeubles,

⁽³⁾ [Marginal comment by Sir L. Mallet: "But they are to be *foreigners*, and Turkey is to ask foreign Powers to lend them. L. M."]

⁽⁴⁾ [Mahmud Sheffket Pasha, murdered in Constantinople on June 11, 1913. v. Gooch & Temperley, IX (II), p. 841, *Ed. note.*]

a été autorisée; la loi élargissant le droit de propriété sur les immeubles a rendu possible le paiement des dettes sur les biens vakoufs et Miri, même après la mort du propriétaire, par cette même loi un large crédit pour l'agriculture a été institué ce qui permettra l'adoption de mesures qui assureront la prospérité des villes et le développement de l'agriculture.

En outre des corps d'inspecteur de gendarmerie sous la présidence de Baumann Pacha ont été envoyés dans chaque Vilayet à l'effet d'étudier sur place le nombre de gendarmes nécessaire à chaque Vilayet pour y assurer l'ordre et la tranquillité, des gendarmes de Roumélie ont été envoyés dans plusieurs endroits et autres seront bientôt envoyés pour compléter les cadres. En vue d'assurer la parfaite application des lois et règlements ci-haut mentionnés, l'Empire a été divisé en 6 secteurs d'inspection générale. Les secteurs importants comme ceux comprenant les Vilayets Orientaux devront avoir à leur tête des inspecteurs généraux étrangers qui auront sous leurs ordres des spécialistes étrangers et ottomans pour la gendarmerie, la justice, les travaux publics et l'agriculture. Pour les Ministères un conseiller et un inspecteur étrangers seront engagés et pour certains Départements des fonctionnaires seront nommés. Le Cabinet de Mahmoud Chevkét Pacha était en correspondance au sujet de l'engagement de tous ces fonctionnaires étrangers. Le Cabinet actuel ayant adopté les mêmes principes, les pourparlers pour l'engagement des Commandments de gendarmerie pour les 7 régiments des Vilayets orientaux et de deux inspecteurs de gendarmerie pour les deux secteurs comprenant ces Vilayets, étant terminés, ces fonctionnaires pourront bientôt prendre possession de leurs fonctions. Des démarches ont été faites en vue d'assurer l'engagement des inspecteurs généraux et des autres fonctionnaires étrangers. Le nombre des membres de la Commission financière instituée au Ministère des Finances a été augmenté et ses attributions ont été étendues à l'élaboration du budget et à la surveillance de la stricte application des lois et règlements financiers.

Enclosure 3 in No. 538.

Additional Articles to the Law for the Administration of the Vilayets.

Article 1. En vue d'accélérer l'application des lois sur l'administration des Vilayets et des communes, d'établir un régime administratif satisfaisant et de consolider et relever l'ordre, la sécurité et la prospérité du pays, l'Empire Ottoman a été divisé en plusieurs secteurs d'inspection dont chacun est confié sous le contrôle d'un Inspecteur Général.

Article 2. Les Inspecteurs Généraux sont nommés pour 5 ans par décision du Conseil des Ministres, sanctionnée par l'radé Impérial.

Article 3. Les devoirs et les attributions des Inspecteurs Généraux seront fixés par un règlement général dont les dispositions seront obligatoires pour les Ministères et les Vilayets.

Article 4. Le nombre des fonctionnaires qui devront être attachés auprès des Inspecteurs Généraux ainsi que celui des spécialistes indigènes et étrangers, sera fixé par le Conseil des Ministres selon l'étendue et les besoins de chaque secteur d'inspection. Ils seront nommés sur la désignation ou avec l'adhésion des Inspecteurs Généraux et leurs attributions seront déterminées par un règlement spécial.

Article 5. Les divergences qui viendraient à surgir entre l'un des Ministères et les Inspecteurs Généraux seront examinées et solutionnées par le Conseil des Ministres.

Article 6. Les articles de loi entreront en vigueur dès la date de leur publication.

Article 7. Le Cabinet des Ministres est chargé de mettre en exécution les présents articles de loi.

Instructions as to the Duties of the Inspectors-General.

Article 1. Les Inspecteurs Généraux établiront leur siège dans une des villes de leur circonscription respective qu'ils jugeraient la plus opportune.

Art. 2. Ils fixent eux-mêmes l'époque et le mode d'exécution des inspections et tournées qu'ils auront à faire dans leur circonscription soit personnellement ou par voie de délégués.

Art. 3. En cas de demande par les inspecteurs généraux, des employés télégraphistes seront détachés à leur résidence privée pour l'expédition de la correspondance officielle. Des gendarmes ou soldats y seront également mis à leur disposition.

Art. 4. Les inspecteurs généraux veilleront à l'application, dans leurs circonscriptions respectives, des dispositions de la loi sur l'Administration des Vilayets et des communes et de tous autres lois et règlements de l'Empire.

Art. 5. Les inspecteurs généraux soumettront à la Sublime Porte après avoir consulté l'avis des Gouverneurs Généraux, des projets de loi motivés pour demander la modification des dispositions des lois de l'Empire qui ne correspondraient pas aux besoins réels de leurs circonscriptions. Ils élaboreront également des instructions susceptibles de faciliter l'application desdites lois dans leurs zones respectives. Ces instructions devront être soumises à l'approbation du Département qu'elles intéressent.

Art. 6. Les inspecteurs généraux désigneront les localités nécessitant la création d'un organe civil en conformité de l'Art. 3 de la loi sur l'administration des Vilayets et après avoir pris à ce sujet l'avis des Gouverneurs généraux et des Commandants des corps d'armée, prépareront les projets de lois y relatifs; ils détermineront les points d'attache de villages et des communes qu'il est prétendu de relever de deux vilayets. Ils feront connaître au Ministère de l'Intérieur leurs avis sur les décisions qui, conformément aux dispositions de l'Art. susdit seraient prises par les Conseils généraux des Vilayets au sujet du changement des chefs-lieux des Sandjaks et des Cazas, de la modification et de la ratification des limites de ces Sandjaks et Cazas, ainsi qu'au sujet des changements qu'il y aurait lieu d'apporter à leur répartition administrative.

Art. 7. En conformité de l'Art. 4 de la loi sur les Vilayets les inspecteurs généraux élaboreront et soumettront au Ministère de l'Intérieur des projets de règlements spéciaux sur l'installation et l'administration des tribus nomades se trouvant dans leurs circonscriptions en tenant compte de leurs us et coutumes, de leurs besoins sociaux et des exigences locales. De concert avec les Valis ils arrêteront les mesures nécessaires pour prévenir toute déprédation de leur part aux contrées habitées, jusqu'à que ces tribus soient installées et accoutumées aux travaux agricoles et industriels.

Art. 8. Il incombe entre autres aux inspecteurs généraux de consolider la bonne harmonie des éléments divers de leur circonscription, de dissiper, s'il en est, les malentendus qui existeraient entre eux, d'assurer l'égalité des droits de tous et de faire respecter d'une façon générale la liberté et les droits de chacun.

Art. 9. Ils contrôlent directement ou indirectement l'état de service de tous les fonctionnaires, vérifient leur degré de capacité et d'activité.

Art. 10. Les inspecteurs généraux révoquent ou transfèrent selon le cas les fonctionnaires dont ils constateraient l'insuffisance ou la mauvaise conduite. Ceux qui se seraient rendus coupables d'une action à réprimer seront directement déférés à la justice.

Art. 11. Les décisions relatives aux fonctionnaires relevant directement des Valis seront communiquées à ces derniers. Les cas des fonctionnaires nommés par les Administrations centrales seront signalés aux Départements respectifs. Les fonctionnaires de ces deux catégories seront au besoin relevés de leurs fonctions.

Art. 12. Les fonctionnaires révoqués sur la demande des inspecteurs généraux ne pourront obtenir leur admission au service tant que les motifs juridiques ou administratifs de leur destitution n'auront été établis par correspondance.

Art. 13. Les inspecteurs administratifs, judiciaires, de la gendarmerie, des travaux publics et de l'agriculture sont placés au même titre que les fonctionnaires des Vilayets sous la surveillance des inspecteurs généraux, et tenus d'exécuter les communications qui leur seraient adressées par ces derniers. Ces inspecteurs soumettent à l'inspecteur général l'original de leurs rapports sur les inspections qu'ils feront en conformité de leurs instructions et en adressant la copie aux Départements dont ils relèvent.

Les rapports d'inspections et d'enquêtes sur les attributions des fonctionnaires, qu'elles soient faites sur l'ordre des Ministères ou de l'inspecteur général, seront également soumis en original aux inspecteurs généraux et en copie aux Ministères respectifs.

Art. 14. Les inspecteurs des finances relèvent directement du Ministère des Finances. Ils enverront au dit Ministère les rapports d'inspection qu'ils auront à effectuer en conformité du règlement spécial et en remettront une copie à l'inspecteur général. Dans le cas où ce dernier jugerait urgent de provoquer l'inspection d'un cas spécial et le notifierait à l'inspecteur en chef (se trouvant au siège de l'inspecteur général, l'inspecteur en chef) est tenu de faire l'inspection voulue soit personnellement soit par les soins d'un autre inspecteur et d'en présenter le rapport à l'inspecteur général. Le Ministère des Finances sera également avisé de pareilles inspections.

Art. 15. Dans le cas où un fonctionnaire judiciaire qui se serait rendu coupable d'une action passible de jugement ou de révocation appartient à la catégorie des juges inamovibles, l'inspecteur général en réfère au Ministère de la Justice pour le faire traduire en justice. La suite ministérielle qui y doit être donnée ne tardera pas au delà d'une semaine. Si ledit fonctionnaire n'est pas un juge, sa révocation et son remplacement seront demandés par l'inspecteur général ou au Ministère de la Justice ou aux Procureurs généraux près les cours d'appel, selon le degré d'importance du poste.

Art. 16. Il est un des plus importants devoirs de l'inspecteur général de veiller à ce que les procès restent à l'abri de toute influence, soient jugés avec la plus grande impartialité et liberté et que les juges ne soient impressionnés d'aucune façon.

Art. XVII. Les communications de l'Inspecteur Général concernant les réformes à introduire dans la partie administrative et la chancellerie des affaires judiciaires pour en assurer le cours régulier, sont obligatoires pour les fonctionnaires judiciaires.

Art. XVIII. L'organisation et la réorganisation de la Police et de la Gendarmerie s'effectuera dans chaque secteur d'inspection, sous la direction et avec la connaissance de l'Inspecteur Général.

Art. XIX. Les modifications qui seraient jugées nécessaires à l'organisation de la police et de la gendarmerie seront, après consultation de l'avis du Vali, signalées par l'inspecteur Général et introduites par l'autorité centrale.

Art. XX. Les inspecteurs généraux vérifient dans tous leurs détails les frais affectés par le budget d'état aux services publics du Vilayet, et, après en avoir référé aux Valis, signaleront ceux qu'ils trouveraient supérieurs ou inférieurs aux besoins réels, en vue de prévenir ainsi les dépenses inutiles, ou de provoquer la majoration nécessaire.

Art. XXI. Les inspecteurs généraux étudieront les moyens nécessaires pour adopter et proposer à l'autorité centrale un système de perception des dîmes, qui tout en sauvegardant et les intérêts du trésor et ceux des contribuables, serait par son caractère simple et pratique, de nature à n'entraîner aucune perte de temps ni difficulté pour les cultivateurs.

Art. XXII. Les inspecteurs généraux, après avoir étudié le mode de perception des impôts fonciers et du temettu et consulté l'avis des Valis pour les localités où ils le croiraient nécessaires, peuvent soumettre des propositions touchant le renouvellement du cadastre ou l'amélioration des réformes générales déjà entamées.

Art. XXIII. Les inspecteurs généraux feront étudier par les soins des conseils de

techniciens spécialistes qui leur sont attachés, tous les moyens auxquels il y aurait utilité de recourir en vue d'entretenir et d'exploiter les mines et fôrets de leur circonscription, au plus grand profit de l'État et du Pays, d'améliorer le sol, d'assurer le progrès de l'agriculture, d'amoindrir les dépenses de rendement, de propager l'instruction publique, d'encourager l'industrie et le commerce, de faciliter les communications, enfin examiner tout ce qui est de nature à contribuer au relèvement intellectuel et économique des Vilayets.

Ils autoriseront les Valis à introduire les réformes relevant de la compétence des Ministères. Celles qui nécessitent des crédits spéciaux dans le budget général ainsi qu'une loi spéciale et une sanction impériale seront référées aux Départements compétents.

No. 539.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 30897/19208/13/44.

Tel. (No. 299.)

Foreign Office, July 4, 1913, 4.30 P.M.

Y[ou]r tel[egram] No. 309 (of July 2⁽²⁾): Armenian reforms).

I am in favour of the Ambassadors discussing the Turkish scheme and am so informing the Russian G[overnmen]t.⁽³⁾ I approve y[ou]r attitude, and you should not commit yourself until an agreement is reached. The scheme submitted for Armenia was of course only to be a base of discussion.

Conf[idential].

I share the apprehensions of the Austrian and German Amb[assado]rs and am opposed to any scheme tending to eventual partition. A compromise in regard to the officials chosen to carry out reforms might be found in selection of those of a minor Power.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to St. Petersburg (No. 497); to Paris (No. 255), "to inform M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs]"; to Berlin (No. 234), "for Amb[assado]r's own information only."]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 471, No. 533.]

⁽³⁾ [v. *infra*, pp. 480-1, No. 541.]

No. 540.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Constantinople, July 4, 1913.

F.O. 30720/19208/13/44.

Tel. (No. 314.)

D. 5 P.M.

R. 10 P.M.

Reform schemes.

My telegram No. 310 of 2nd July.⁽²⁾

Supplementary law has been sanctioned by Imperial iradé and promulgated in "Official Gazette." It comes into force at once.

German Ambassador has stated to me categorically that he will oppose any proposal that will create a special privileged position for Armenian provinces, and therefore insists on taking Turkish scheme providing reforms for whole Empire as

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Paris (as No. 258); to Berlin (as No. 236); to St. Petersburg (as No. 499). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 471-2, No. 534.]

basis for our discussions here. Russian Ambassador, on other hand, seems determined to stick to his guns, and from St. Petersburg telegram No. 242 of July 2⁽¹⁾ I gather that he is supported by his Government. French Chargé d'Affaires will, I understand, take up (group omitted: ? same) attitude as myself, while German Ambassador will be supported by Austrian and Italian Ambassadors. Deadlock will thus arise until a new basis of discussion can be found by Powers.

I venture to call your attention to double difficulty of imposing Russian scheme on Turkey if latter employs German support in her resistance. On other hand, disappointment of Armenians at (group omitted: ? not obtaining privileged position under Russia which they have been led to expect may lead to disorders, and Russian Government might find it difficult to abstain from active intervention.

(Confidential.)

I have no doubt that action of Turkey in attempting to forestall us by her own scheme has been guided by German Ambassador.

MINUTES.

Mr. Marling knows Sir E. Grey's views since our telegram No. 498 to St. Petersburg has been repeated to him for his information.⁽¹⁾

We consider that the Turkish scheme should be taken into consideration which, as it is more comprehensive than the Russian scheme, means practically that it must form the basis of discussion. This the Russians will not admit.

It would be more prudent to defer instructions to Mr. Marling till we have an answer from St. Petersburg.

I much doubt whether the Armenians are so anxious for Russian occupation or protection or autonomy under Russian auspices as the Russians are fond of asserting. The position of the Russian Armenians has not always been a happy one and many people of experience think that the Armenians of Turkey as a whole would prefer to remain under Turkish rule with the necessary guarantees.⁽⁵⁾

H. N.

July 5, 1913.

Await reply from St. Petersburg to Telegram No. 498 of July 4.⁽⁴⁾

R. P. M.

I entirely agree with the German Gov[ernment] and hope that we shall be able to induce M. Sazonov to be reasonable.

L. M.

A. N.

We must wait for M. Sazonov's reply to our telegram.⁽⁶⁾

E. G.

⁽³⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 472, No. 535.]

⁽⁴⁾ [v. immediately succeeding document, and *note* ⁽¹⁾.]

⁽⁵⁾ [Marginal note by Sir A. Nicolson: "I very much doubt this after the experience since 1880. A. N."]

⁽⁶⁾ [v. *infra*, pp. 482-3, No. 542.]

No. 541.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 30400/19208/13/44.

Tel. (No. 498.)

Foreign Office, July 4, 1913, 7-20 p.m.

Your tel[egram] No. 248 (of July 2: Armenia).⁽²⁾

You should remind M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] that as soon as the Turkish request was made to us for the loan of several British officials to organise

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Berlin (No. 235), "for confidential information of Amb[assador]"; to Paris (No. 257), "for information of M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs]"; to Constantinople (No. 301), "for information." *cp. D.D.F., 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VII, pp. 382-3, No 345, encl.*]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 473-4, No 536.]

various Dep[artmen]ts in the Ottoman Administration, we acquainted him with the fact. We explained to him at the same time that while declining to accord all that was requested we could not refuse to afford some assistance. We understood at the time that though the Turkish request was not entirely agreeable to M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] he did not raise any positive objections to it nor to the limited aid which we felt bound to give.

The Turkish Gov[ernmen]t have now comm[unicate]d to all the Powers projects of reform for their Asiatic provinces which projects will of course have to be discussed by all the Powers. In these circum[stan]ces we are prepared to inform Turkish Gov[ernmen]t that we consider it desirable not to proceed further with the selection and appointment of British officers, as the whole question as to the employment of foreign advisers and instructors will have to be examined by all the Powers and Turkey, and that it would only cause confusion if pending such discussion one individual Great Power should supply, even provisionally, officers for the execution of reforms still under examination. As however reports are already current as to massacres in certain Armenian vilayets, and as it is therefore urgently necessary to do what is possible to assist the Ottoman Gov[ernmen]t in maintaining order and security, I cordially agree with the proposal of M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] that officers of some minor Power should be employed in those vilayets, and I would support any suggestion he is disposed to make to the S[ublime] Porte in that sense. It would be necessary that all the Powers should be invited to associate themselves with such steps. I am also prepared to support the French proposal for a Haut Commissaire as a temporary provision for the immediate emergency.

I will inform the Turkish Amba[ssado]r here of the reasons which induce H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] to abstain from lending British officers at this juncture.⁽³⁾ But if we take this step it is to secure agreement in a scheme of reforms that will maintain the integrity of the Turkish dominions in Asiatic Turkey and we wish to avoid any scheme that will tend to partition.

Sir E. Goschen's tel[egram] No. 92 repeated to you of substance of which you may inform M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] shows that the scheme of reforms now being put forward for Armenia will precipitate this tendency and provoke complications.⁽⁴⁾ I think therefore that it would be essential to take up question of reforms for Asiatic Turkey as a whole and for this purpose to take the Turkish scheme into consideration by the Ambassadors at Constantinople if a separate scheme of reforms for Armenia is pressed it should not go beyond the scheme of 1895.

It is evident that we must get the Powers in agreement about a scheme of reforms, otherwise Turkey will never be induced to accept it.

A grave question of policy is involved and the only policy to which we can become a party is one directed to avoid collapse and partition of Asiatic Turkey. The effect of the opposite course upon our own Mussulmans in India would be disastrous to say nothing of the complications that would be produced between European Powers.

MINUTE.

The Turkish Ambassador applied orally on Ap[ril] 19 and in writing on Ap[ril] 24 for a large number of British officials for Eastern and Northern Anatolia and for two for the Ministry of the Interior. On May 17 he applied for others for the vilayet of Damascus, but subsequently explained that this was a mistake and that they were really wanted for Constantinople, Brussa and Smyrna. M. Etter was told of the request and our proposed reply on May 15.

We told M. Sazonoff who thanked [us] for the information on May 21 but wanted the question treated with the general question of reforms.

⁽³⁾ [*cp. infra*, pp 485-6, No. 544. On July 4 letters were sent to the War Office and the India Office suspending the appointment of British officers to the gendarmerie "at any rate for the present." (F.O. 30400/19208/13/44.)]

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 470, No. 532, and note ⁽¹⁾.]

On May 21 again Count Benckendorff was told that we proposed to comply with the Turkish request as regards gendarmerie officers as we could not altogether discourage Turkey's desire for reform.

We explained our attitude in detail to M. Sazonoff on May 23

M. Sazonoff made objections on May 26, and spoke of employing Russian, French and British officers in Armenia.

After this the discussion of the general question of reforms rather put that of the officers in the background, but on June 16 Sir G. Buchanan was instructed by despatch to tell M. Sazonoff that we had told the Turks we would lend a few officers provisionally and on June 26 he reported that M. Sazonoff had received this very ill, but eventually he consented (see last paragraph but one of 29348)⁽⁵⁾ on condition that the appointments were provisional

Sir G. Buchanan was told on June 28 to explain again, but reported on June 29 that M. Sazonoff wished us to defer sending the officers till the general scheme had been worked out.

On July 1 we explained why we could not do this, but the latest telegram shows with how little success.

We told the Russian Gov[ernmen]t long before we answered the Turks (which was on May 24) but did not ask their consent to the course we proposed to adopt: though they have known of it all this time they have only just begun to object violently. It is clear that the military party has awoken and M. Sazonoff fears to be considered weak.

H. N

July 3, 1913.

(⁵) [*v. supra*, p. 464, No. 524]

No. 542.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 31062/19208/13/44.

St. Petersburg, D. July 6, 1913, 11 P.M.

Tel. (No. 247.)

R. July 7, 1913, 11.15 A.M.

I communicated to the M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] to-day the substance of your telegram No. 498 of July 4,⁽²⁾ and gave him an aide-mémoire to which he has promised a reply.

While much relieved to hear that you would not proceed further at present with appointment of British officers, he said that the French Government have now dropped their proposal for High Commissioner and that question of appointment of officers of some minor Power might be left over till general reform scheme had been agreed on. I pointed out that it was absolutely necessary to do something to meet danger of massacres occurring in the meanwhile, and that appointment of officers of minor Power was only alternative to employment of British officers. H[is] E[xc]cellency said that he would think over the matter.

The M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] then proceeded to discuss the general question of reforms. There was, he feared, a disposition in certain quarters in England to credit him with the desire of bringing about disintegration of the Turkish Empire in Asia. He would give me most positive assurance that the Russian Government honestly aimed at the maintenance of the integrity of that Empire and it was with this end in view that they were insisting on realization of serious reforms. The history of Turkey in Europe showed what was inevitable result of patchwork reforms. Distrust of Russia had prevented Europe taking work of Macedonian reforms seriously in hand and if this example was followed in Asiatic Turkey, what was left of Turkish Empire would crumble away. The situation in Armenia was

(1) [This telegram was sent to Paris by bag; to Berlin (as No. 240); to Constantinople (as No. 308); for information. Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

(2) [*v. immediately preceding document.*]

becoming most serious, arms were being smuggled there and Russia would not be able to tolerate revolution on her borders. The situation to-day was no longer what it was in 1895, and it was in order to avert and not precipitate Turkey's disintegration that Russia was acting as she was doing.

I said that H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] did not for one moment suspect him of having sinister designs on Turkey, but that they were apprehensive of serious consequences that might ensue were he to insist on giving a privileged position to Armenia. Germany looked on Russian project as first step towards partition and no reform scheme had any chance of success that could not count on the support of all the Powers. It was therefore necessary, if complications were to be avoided there, (?) to treat the question of Asiatic reforms as a whole. The M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] replied that Germany's opposition was prompted by the desire to sow dissension between Russia and England. He had no objection to reforms such as he had proposed being introduced into other parts of Asiatic Turkey or to Russian project being taken as basis of discussion for a general scheme of reforms. That project was however minimum of what was required for Armenia and he could not sufficiently impress me with the fact that unlike the question that had recently arisen respecting Albania and the Adriatic, Armenian question was one which affected the vital interest of Russia. It was essential therefore that the two Governments should keep together in their treatment of it.

I said that you had made a great concession in yielding with regard to the appointment of British officers and that I trusted that H[is] E[xc]ellency would take your views with regard to reform scheme into consideration.

MINUTES.

We might approve Sir G. Buchanan's language.

M. Sazonoff is doubtless quite honest in his point of view but I do not see why he should not give Germany credit for honesty also.

Could he not be persuaded to settle the matter direct with the Germans? With goodwill on both sides this ought to be possible. The Germans might consent to take the Russian scheme as a basis and the Russians to take the Turkish scheme into consideration and to discuss reforms for the whole Empire and not for Armenia only.

If some agreement is not soon reached serious massacres will occur (indeed they may have occurred already) Russia will find herself forced to intervene and the consequences are incalculable.

H. N.

July 7, 1913

R. P. M.

M. Sazonov has refused to consider the Turkish scheme. He may give way to our arguments and probably will. He has promised a further reply. In the meantime his attitude is very characteristic—greedily accepting our concession and waiving aside the implied condition that the officials of minor Powers must be sent at once to the Armenian provinces.

I think we should point out that this is an essential part of our renunciation and that the Turkish reform scheme must be considered.

2. One cannot but assume that a statesman taking up the attitude of M. Sazonov at this juncture in Turkish history, is making for the disruption of the Empire. Major Tyrrell said that if it is really proposed by the Powers to enforce the autonomy of Armenia on Turkey without even consulting her or taking her own reform scheme into consideration the men at present in power at Constantinople would sooner set all the Provinces ablaze and go down fighting than submit. If the Russian proposal is adopted it will be the signal for massacres all over the country. It is curious that any statesman should launch such a far-reaching proposal at this moment.

3 His answer to our objection to his scheme is to offer that similar schemes should be applied to all other parts of Turkey! and he goes on to say that the German fears that it will lead to similar demands elsewhere and to partition are all bluff and merely intended to separate us from Russia! His reiteration of Russian vital interests in Armenia are, however, ominous for the future and far more important than his disclaimer of any hostile designs on Turkey, and I should like to remind him that the Armenian question is an interest of all the Powers (see Berlin Treaty). It is an especial and vital interest of

ours, as the partition of Asiatic Turkey⁽³⁾ would have serious effects in India and we should be forced into reconsidering our whole position. M. Sazonov should be left under no illusions on this point and Sir G. Buchanan should be instructed in this sense as soon as possible and told to make clear our attitude in regard to officials of a minor Power and as to Turkish reform and I think that a general warning should be addressed to him as to the danger of provoking and irritating the Turkish Gov[ernment] beyond endurance at this stage by proposals tending to partition and of the absolute necessity of carrying all the Powers and Turkey with us if any reforms are to be introduced at all.

L. M.
July 7.

Sir A. Nicolson should bring up with Sir L. Mallet tomorrow⁽⁴⁾

E. G.
7 7.13

(³) [The rest of this Minute was re-written by Sir L. Mallet, and runs as follows:—

“ . . . would have the most serious effect on our position in the Mediterranean and disastrous results in India. M. Sazonov should be left under no illusion on this point and the sooner he is enlightened the better. He might be told that you are as anxious as he is to maintain our co-operation but there must be give and take. We have done our share of giving and you will not be able to co-operate on present lines

L. M.
July 7.”

The following Minute by Sir A. Nicolson was added here:—

As to employment of officers of a minor Power M. Sazonov has promised to think over the matter and we can give him time to reflect. I think Mr. Marling has tel[egraphe]d to say that he has not heard of massacres and that the situation in Armenia is about the same as it was. In regard to the tenour of M. Sazonov's observations in respect to reforms in Asiatic Turkey there is, I submit, matter for consideration—and we should not hastily brush them aside. Russia has naturally more immediate and direct interest in the Vilayets adjoining her frontier than anyone else—and allowances should be made for her desiring that a fairly complete scheme, offering some hope of satisfying the needs and desires of the Armenians, should be introduced. I am anxious to see this question with Russia dealt with calmly and temperately—and I do not think that we shall find M. Sazonov unreasonable. I doubt if it would be acceptable to Russia or practicable that we sh[oul]d suggest that she sh[oul]d discuss the question alone with Germany—and I would eliminate all discussions as to “motives” on any side. Apparently we are all agreed that the integrity of the Ottoman Empire in Asia sh[oul]d, if possible, be preserved. There are differences of opinion as to the best methods to attain that end—but I do not think that these differences are insurmountable. Let us work to reconcile those differences—but I would like to talk to the Sec[retary] of State as to the best procedure as it is difficult to examine in minutes the question in all its bearings.

A. N.]

(⁴) [*cp. infra*, pp. 488-9, No. 547]

No. 543.

Sir Edward Grey to Lord Granville.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 31661/19208/13/44.

(No. 225.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 7, 1913.

The German Ambassador told me to-day⁽²⁾ that Mr. Fitzmaurice, at the meeting of Ambassadors in Constantinople to discuss the reforms for Asiatic Turkey, had said that he had not received instructions to discuss the Turkish proposals that were now put forward. The Ambassador had understood that I had agreed that the proposals from the Turkish Government should be taken into consideration.⁽³⁾

(¹) [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

(²) [*cp. G.P.*, XXXVIII, p. 99.]

(³) [*cp. supra*, p. 479, No. 539; pp. 480-1, No. 541.]

I said that I had suggested that, if the Turkish Government communicated proposals of their own for reforms, these should be taken into consideration, though not necessarily in substitution or in preference to reforms based upon the scheme of 1895 for Armenia. Now that Turkey had put forward proposals, I had suggested in St. Petersburg that the Turkish proposals must be taken into consideration for Asiatic Turkey, and that to secure agreement between the Powers it would be well that the reforms for Armenia should not go beyond those proposed in 1895.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

[ED. NOTE.—Mr. Marling's despatch (No. 595), D. July 7, R. July 15, 1913, forwarded to Sir Edward Grey a copy of a *note verbale* which had been sent by the Porte to the embassies at Constantinople. He enclosed also a list of the secteurs into which Asia Minor was to be divided under the Turkish reform scheme, and pointed out that "the Armenian Vilayets are divided between two secteurs, the third and fifth, the former comprising Erzeroum, Sivas, Trebizond and Janik, and the latter Bitlis, Diarbekir, Mamouret-ul-Aziz, and Van, an arrangement obviously intended to forestall the Russian proposal involving the creation of a single Armenian province."

(F.O. 32583/19208/13/44.)

Said Halim Pasha to Mr. Marling.

Monsieur le Chargé d'Affaires,

Sublime Porte, le 5 juillet, 1913.

Pour faire suite à ma communication en date du 1 juillet c[ourant], N. 34233 "75,⁽¹⁾ j'ai l'honneur de vous faire parvenir à titre d'information, le tableau contenant la classification des six secteurs comprenant les Vilayets et Sandjaks de la Turquie d'Asie et dépendant des Inspections Générales créées conformément à la loi additionnelle sur l'administration des Vilayets.

Ainsi que Vous avez dû le constater par la lecture de ma communication précitée, le Gouvernement Impérial a commencé depuis plusieurs mois l'application des réformes sur la base de la loi sur l'administration des Vilayets et a donné en dernier lieu à cette œuvre une plus large extension, en édictant d'une façon définitive par une loi additionnelle la création d'Inspections Générales.

La Sublime Porte ayant décidé dès le début d'avoir recours à la collaboration des spécialistes étrangers en vue de mener à bonne fin aussi promptement que possible cette œuvre importante de réformes et étant déjà sur le point d'en engager plusieurs, espère fermement pouvoir y parvenir bientôt et demeure persuadée que les Puissances voudront bien lui faciliter sa tâche par leur appui moral et financier

Veuillez, &c.

SAID HALIM.]

⁽¹⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 475, No. 538, *encl.* 1.]

No. 544.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 31426/19208/13/44.

(No. 216.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 8, 1913.

Sir A. Nicolson told the Turkish Ambassador on the 4th inst[ant] that, as the Ottoman Gov[ernment] had communicated to the Powers some reform projects for Asiatic Turkey, it appeared to H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] that confusion might arise if pending the discussion and elaboration of such reforms by all the Powers this country were to furnish British officers at this juncture. H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] had, therefore, suspended seeking for any officers.⁽²⁾

⁽¹⁾ [A copy of this despatch was sent to the War Office.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp. 480-1, No. 541, and *note* (3).]

Tewfik Pasha said that he quite understood the position, but he presumed that perhaps later Great Britain would not abstain from lending officers.

Sir A. N[icolson] said that when a project of reforms had been finally settled and agreed upon, and if the Powers considered that the employment of British, among other officers was desirable, H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] would of course be only too happy to provide some.

[I am, &c.]
E. G[REY].

No. 545.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 31543/19208/13/44.

St. Petersburg, D. July 8, 1913, 12.45 A.M. [sic].

Tel. (No. 251.)

R. July 9, 1913, noon.

My tel[egram] No. 247 of July 6.⁽²⁾

Aide-mémoire I have to-day received after expressing gratification of the Russian Government at decision of H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] not to proceed further with the appointment of British officers for Armenian gendarmerie and repeating their desire to maintain solidarity between (? with) French and British Governments in the question of reforms states that Russia is at one with Great Britain in opposing all idea of dismemberment of Turkish Empire.⁽³⁾

It states that integrity of Turkey depends largely on pacification of those countries which have suffered most from arbitrary and vexatious rule of a faulty administration.

This pacification can only be effected if the Powers undertake without delay realization of indispensable reforms.

Russian Government have repeatedly drawn attention both of Powers and of the Porte to close connection for Russia of the Armenian question in Turkey and the problems of Russian administration of the Caucasus.

Russia cannot tolerate a chronic state of disorder and anarchy which owing to proximity of Turkish frontier cannot but react in most dangerous manner on the bordering districts of the Caucasus. Recent reports confirm the impression of His Majesty's Gov[ernmen]t that disorders are shortly to be expected on the part of the Kurds. It is to be feared that folly and weakness of local Turkish Authorities may result in events to which Russia can in no way remain indifferent.

Therefore prompt and as far as possible complete agreement between the Powers is only means of forestalling imminent danger fraught with serious complications.

As regards provisional measures to which you referred in your tel[egram] No. 498 of July 4,⁽⁴⁾ the Russian Government are ready without expressing an opinion as to their practical value to submit such questions first of all to consideration of the three Ambassadors at Constantinople.

M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs], whom I saw last night told me that he is sending circular telegram to Russian Ambassadors to the Five Powers in the sense of above aide-mémoire.

I remarked that the Russian project which I had just read was in my opinion quite unsuited to serve as basis of discussion for general scheme of reforms for Asiatic Turkey. H[is] E[xc]ellency replied that it would be impossible to elaborate any general scheme and that each province would have to be treated separately so that each might be endowed with reforms suited to its particular requirements.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Berlin (as No. 250); to Vienna (as No. 268); to Paris (as No. 268); to Constantinople (as No. 315); to Rome (as No. 201). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 482-3, No. 542.]

⁽³⁾ [v. *infra*, p. 492, No. 552, *encl.*]

⁽⁴⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 480-1, No. 541.]

MINUTE

M. Sazonow is sending a circular tel[egram] to the Russian R[ep]R[esentatives] at all 5 Courts in sense of his aide mémoire—and, therefore, presumably all the 6 Powers can now interchange views on this Russian project. We might enquire of our R[ep]R[esentatives] at the 5 capitals what views the M[inisters for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] take of the question.⁽⁵⁾

A N
E G

⁽⁵⁾ [*v. infra*, p. 490, No. 549, and *note* (1).]

No. 546.

Lord Granville to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Berlin, July 9, 1913.

F.O. 31604/19208/13/44.

Tel. (No. 102.)

D. 8.30 P.M.

R. 11 P.M.

Minister for Foreign Affairs has just spoken to me at some length on subject of reforms in Asiatic Turkey. He fears Russian scheme, if adopted, is certain to create troubles throughout Asiatic Turkey and lead to partition. I said that I had seen a telegram from St. Petersburg reporting strong declaration from Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs that he was as much opposed to partition as we or Germany.⁽²⁾ His Excellency said he fully believed that and had complete confidence in Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs' honesty, though not perhaps in that of all Russians; but he maintained that scheme, however honestly meant, must lead in that direction. If the six vilayets were formed into a separate province after the excision of certain districts inhabited by Mussulmans that province must inevitably gravitate towards Russia, but, besides that, institution of reforms in that province would excite troubles among Armenians in other vilayets and among all the various nationalities, who would all demand similar treatment; if that were granted Asiatic Turkey would be at once split up into provinces each under the influence of some Power, and partition would practically have taken place. He was most anxious that Turkish scheme should be examined and discussed by Ambassadors before the Russian scheme, and he would propose that, after possible amendments, Turks should be told to put it into force with a strong intimation that other measures would be taken in case their scheme failed. He was personally much inclined to idea of commission of control sitting permanently at Constantinople, composed half of Turks and half of delegates of other Powers, who should watch progress, and to whom murders and outrages could be referred instead of being made subjects of diplomatic representations on each occasion. Minister for Foreign Affairs added that he had sent precisely the same instructions to St. Petersburg as to London, and that he was therefore acting quite openly in the matter.

MINUTE.

It is unnecessary to give the Turkish scheme *precedence* of the Russian, what we have urged is that Russian scheme should be modified and the Turkish taken into consideration *with it*.

E. G.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to St. Petersburg (as No. 510); to Constantinople (as No. 314), "for information only." Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 482–3, No. 542, and *note* (1).]

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 31062/19208/13/44.

Tel. (No. 508.)

Foreign Office, July 9, 1913.

Your telegram No. 247.⁽²⁾

Your Excellency should point out to Monsieur Sazonow the responsibility which will rest upon the Powers, if massacres occur in Asiatic Turkey pending the adoption of reform.

It was in deference to his objections that I agreed to suspend the employment of British Gendarmerie officers for the present,⁽³⁾ but it was on the implied condition that the officials of some minor Power should be sent at once to Eastern and Northern Anatolia.

As to reform, Your Excellency should impress upon Monsieur Sazonow that two conditions are essential to success.

1. unanimity amongst the Powers
2. acceptance of their scheme by Turkey, without coercion.

The first is jeopardized, if Monsieur Sazonow insists upon the adoption of his proposals without amendment. The German Government have pointed out the objections to them and in some important respects they go too far and would lead to partition. They seek to create a very large and unwieldy Province under a Christian Governor General with almost independent powers and, even if accepted unanimously by the Powers of which there is now no chance, they would I fear excite determined opposition on the part of the Ottoman Government and drive them to extremities.

In the interests of reform it is important to avoid anything of this kind and to carry all the Powers with us, as an agreement between the Powers will depend the extent of reform that the Ottoman Gov[ernmen]t can be induced to accept. In order to do this, the Powers should not refuse to consider the Ottoman scheme of reform and to adopt such of its provisions as appear practicable.

It would be unreasonable to insist upon the wholesale adoption of any one scheme before it has been discussed by all the Ambassadors and to exclude consideration by them of all other projects.

There may be features in the Ottoman project which it will be useful to adopt and the more of it which can be utilized the better. I am therefore of opinion that both schemes should be taken into consideration by the Representatives at Constantinople who should be instructed to try and evolve a measure of reform which will be acceptable to the Powers and to Turkey.

The first object should be the prevention of massacres and of harsh and oppressive treatment of the Armenians and Christian population. Monsieur Sazonow's proposal to employ the officials of some minor Power to execute the reforms would solve some difficult questions and disarm suspicion.

I fully recognise the special interest which Russia has in districts adjoining her frontier and which are inhabited by numerous Armenians whose co-religionists reside in large numbers over the Russian border. If it is thought absolutely essential to introduce some special measures for the Armenian vilayets in addition to and supplementary to a general scheme of reforms for the whole Empire, these questions can be examined by the Amba[ssado]rs at Const[antino]ple. I sincerely trust that

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Paris (No. 265), "for communication to M. Pichon" (No. 266); to Berlin (No. 247), "for confidential information"; to Constantinople. A paraphrase was given to M. Paul Cambon by Sir A. Nicolson on July 10. *v. D.D.F.*, 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VII, pp. 387-91, No. 349, and *encl.*]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 482-3, No. 542.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 480-1, No. 541, and *note* ⁽³⁾; pp. 485-6, No. 544.]

M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] will consent to a free discussion of all reform projects, and he may rely on my co-operation in endeavouring to produce a scheme of a practical nature acceptable to all the Powers and to Turkey. But you should remind him that British interests may also be vitally affected by a break-up of Asiatic Turkey and that what is done in Armenia may react upon Asiatic Turkey as a whole.

No. 548.

Sir A. Nicolson to Mr. Marling.

Private.⁽¹⁾

My dear Marling,

Foreign Office, July 9, 1913.

I am much obliged to you for the letter which I received by the last Messenger.⁽²⁾ You will see from the sections the conversations which have taken place between Buchanan and Sazonoff in regard to Armenian reforms. We are at present engaged in drafting an answer to Sazonoff's observations.⁽³⁾ I quite understand the very special interest which Russian must have in those vilayets which are close to her frontier and which are inhabited by so many Armenians and I think that every allowance should be made for her views on the subject. Still I think that the project which goes under the name of the Russian project goes a little too far. It seems to me that the grouping of these vilayets into one large province and placing at the head of it a Governor General with so wide and independent powers is a measure to which I doubt very much we should ever get the other Powers to consent, and which indeed might give rise to similar demands in other portions of the Asiatic dominions of Turkey. Personally I should prefer to maintain the vilayet system though I see no objection myself to placing a Governor General over them, at least in those which are nearest the Russian frontier. In my view we should disturb as little as possible the general framework of Turkish administration and endeavour to improve and strengthen it by as many safeguards and control as is feasible. I trust that we shall be able eventually to persuade Sazonoff to allow the Russian project to be discussed in conjunction with those presented by Turkey by the Ambassadors at Constantinople, and see if it would not be possible to combine them into some general scheme which, while preserving the integrity of the Turkish dominions, will afford some hope of reforms being seriously carried out and properly supervised. It may be that in what are termed the Armenian Vilayets certain special measures may be required in addition, but these can easily be discussed at your meetings at Constantinople. I hope that to-day we shall be able to come to some decision as to the reply to be sent to Sazonoff but I give these views of mine merely for your personal information. I think that we should certainly do all in our power, especially in view of the feelings of our Mahomedan subjects in India, to strengthen the Turkish Government, though I am afraid it will always be a difficult task to find Turkish officials who are competent and trustworthy. I cannot help having a certain scepticism as to the efficacy of any measures of reform. Past history has not given us a very encouraging experience in that respect and I am afraid that Turkish prestige has been rudely shaken throughout the whole of the Ottoman Empire.

I am not going to trouble you with this Balkan embroglio which is one of the saddest spectacles which I have seen during my official career. It is quite impossible to form any opinion as to how matters are really developing in view of the

⁽¹⁾ [Carnock MSS., Vol. VII of 1913.]

⁽²⁾ [The reference is to Mr. Marling's letter of July 2, not reproduced. This letter relates to his telegrams of July 2 (*v. supra*, pp. 471-2, Nos. 533-4). He mentions the views of the German and Austro-Hungarian Ambassadors, as being unfavourable to "the Russian scheme." *cp. infra*, pp. 493-4, No. 553. He said that he would give them no definite answer until he had received instructions. Carnock MSS., Vol. VII of 1913.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. immediately preceding document.*]

contradictory reports which we have received from all quarters. So far as one is able to judge Bulgaria seems to be getting the worst of it and I do not know whether this is satisfactory or not. Were she to obtain any striking successes I think it extremely probable that Roumania would actively intervene, as from what the Roumanian Minister here tells me his country is determined to preserve what he calls the equilibrium of the Balkans. On the other hand if Servia comes out the winner, Austria may begin to be restless and uneasy, but I do not myself anticipate that any of the events which are occurring in the Balkans will lead to any serious friction between the European Powers.

I am afraid that you will have an anxious and laborious time at Constantinople, but I can tell you that we are all very content that you are in charge as we all have great confidence in your judgment and experience.

[Yours, &c.
A. NICOLSON.]

No. 549.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 31548/19208/13/44.

Tel. (No. 269.)

Foreign Office, July 10, 1913, 5.10 P.M.

Russian M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] is sending circular telegram to Russian Rep[resentati]ves at capitals of other Great Powers concerning reforms in Turkey.⁽²⁾

You should ascertain in due course views of Gov[ernmen]t to which you are accredited on Russian proposals and question in general.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Berlin (No. 253); to Vienna (No. 209); to Rome (No. 202); to St. Petersburg (No. 511); and to Constantinople (No. 316), "for information" Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 486-7, No. 545, and *min.*; *cp. infra*, p. 492, No. 552, *encl.*]

No. 550.

Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

[By Post.]

F.O. 31790/19208/13/44.

Tel. (No. 90.)

Paris, D. July 10, 1913.

R. July 11, 1913.

Your last night's telegrams No. 508 to St. Petersburg and No. 266 to me.⁽²⁾

M. Pichon, whom I have seen this evening, says that the policy of the French Government is consolidation of the Ottoman Empire and not partition.⁽³⁾

His Excellency concurs with your view that the project of reforms should be elaborated by all the Powers in consultation with the Porte, and not be founded on any one scheme only, and that, meanwhile, officers of some minor Power should be

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to St. Petersburg (as No. 518); to Berlin (as No. 266); to Vienna (as No. 216); to Rome (as No. 206); to Constantinople (as No. 321). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 488-9, No. 547, and *note* ⁽¹⁾. Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 266) to Sir F. Bertie, instructed him to communicate this telegram to M. Pichon.]

⁽³⁾ [There is a report by M. Paul Cambon on July 10 of a conversation on that day with Sir A. Nicolson. *v. D.D.F.*, 3^{me} *Sér.*, Vol. VII, pp. 368-70, No. 331.]

employed. The French Government did not drop their proposal for the appointment of a High Commissioner, as stated by M. Sazonof (see St. Petersburg telegram No. 247 of 6th July).⁽¹⁾ The Russian Government requested them not to press it.

M. Pichon will telegraph to St. Petersburg recommending the Russian Government to water their wine.

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, pp 482-3, No. 542.]

No. 551.

Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

[By Post.]

F.O. 31993/19208/13/44.

Tel. (No. 91.)

Paris, D. July 11, 1913.

R. July 12, 1913.

Your telegram No. 269 of yesterday.⁽²⁾

Monsieur Pichon had not received the Russian scheme of reforms which the French Ambassador at [St.] Petersburg announces that he is sending by post.

His Excellency will let me know the views of the French Government when he has the scheme with M. Delcassé's observations on it.

As M. Pichon was ignorant of the purport of the Russian scheme I gave him Sir George Buchanan's account of it as reported in his telegram No. 251 of the 8th instant,⁽³⁾ and I told him that the German Government is opposed to it as calculated to lead to partition.

MINUTE.

It is strange that M. Pichon has never seen the Russian project which was discussed by the 3 Amb[assadors] at Constantinople.

L. M.

E. G.

⁽¹⁾ [Copies of this telegram were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 490, No. 549.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 486, No. 545.]

No. 552.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 32646/19208/13/44.

(No. 214.)

St. Petersburg, D. July 11, 1913.

Sir,

R. July 16, 1913.

I have the honour to forward to you herewith copy of the Aide Memoire on the subject of Armenian Reforms communicated to me by the Russian Government on the 8th. inst. and summarized by me in my telegram to you of that date.⁽²⁾

⁽¹⁾ [A copy of this despatch was sent to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 486, No. 545.]

The text of paragraphs 3 to 7 of the enclosed Aide Memoire is identical with that of an Aide Memoire which, as His Excellency informs me, M. Sazonow handed to the German, Austrian, French and Italian Ambassadors here for communication to their respective Governments on the 9th. inst[ant].⁽³⁾

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

Enclosure in No. 552.

Aide-mémoire communicated to Sir G. Buchanan by Russian Government.

Le Ministère Impérial des Affaires Étrangères a pris connaissance du contenu du télégramme de Son Excellence Sir E. Grey en date du 4 Juillet n.st. 1913.⁽¹⁾ que l'Ambassade Royale a bien voulu lui communiquer.

En appréciant hautement le caractère loyal de la réponse de Sa Majesté Britannique à la Sublime Porte, déclinant pour le moment l'envoi d'officiers anglais dans les Vilayets arméniens avant que les Puissances soient tombées d'accord sur les réformes à y introduire, le Ministère Impérial croit de son devoir de réitérer son désir le plus sincère de ne point départir d'une étroite solidarité de vues et d'actions avec le Gouvernement Royal ainsi qu'avec celui de la République Française dans la question de ces réformes.

D'accord avec l'Angleterre, la Russie est contraire à toute idée de démembrement de l'empire Ottoman. Le Ministère Impérial réitère sa conviction profonde que l'intégrité de la Turquie dépend en grande partie de la pacification de ces contrées les plus éprouvées par l'arbitraire et les vexations de toute sorte, qu'elles ont subies du fait d'une administration défectueuses.

Cette pacification ne pourra, cependant, avoir lieu que si les Puissances prennent sans retard en mains la réalisation des réformes indispensables.

Le Gouvernement Impérial a à maintes reprises attiré l'attention des Grandes Puissances, ainsi que celle de la Porte, sur l'étroite connexion qui existe pour lui entre la question Arménienne en Turquie et les problèmes de l'administration Russe au Caucase.

Le Gouvernement Impérial ne saurait tolérer un état chronique de désordre et d'anarchie qui, grâce à la proximité de la frontière turque, ne peut ne pas avoir une répercussion des plus dangereuses dans les régions limitrophes du Caucase. Les dernières nouvelles ne font que confirmer l'impression, du reste partagée par le Gouvernement Britannique, qu'on peut s'attendre prochainement à des excès regrettables de la part des Kurdes. L'impéritie et la faiblesse des autorités locales turques font redouter l'éventualité d'événements auxquels le Gouvernement Impérial ne saurait en aucun cas rester indifférent.

Dans ces circonstances, un accord prompt et aussi complet que possible entre les Puissances pourrait seul prévenir le danger autrement imminent de complications périlleuses.

Quant aux mesures d'ordre provisoire, dont fait mention le télégramme de Sir E. Grey, le Ministère Impérial serait disposé, sans préjuger de leur portée pratique, à les soumettre tout d'abord à l'appréciation des Ambassadeurs de la Triple Entente à Constantinople.

St. Pétersbourg, 25 Juin/8 Juillet 1913.

⁽³⁾ [cp. D.D.F., 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VII, pp. 383-5, No. 345, encl. cp. also Herr von Jagow's comments, G.P., XXXVIII, pp. 104-5.]

⁽⁴⁾ [v. supra, pp. 480-1, No. 541.]

No. 553.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.(¹)

F.O. 33999/19208/13/44.

(No. 621.)

Constantinople, D. July 12, 1913.

Sir,

R. July 24, 1913.

In my telegram No. 309 of the 2nd instant(²) I mentioned the fondness exhibited in conversation with myself by the German and Austro-Hungarian Ambassadors of dwelling on the danger of allowing the creation under Russian auspices of a specially privileged Armenian province in north-eastern Anatolia. According to Baron Wangenheim this would be tantamount to creating a Russian sphere of interest in those regions which would inevitably lead to a Russian occupation, and be the stepping stone on the way to the taking of Constantinople itself. Germany, said His Excellency, could not tolerate anything tending to such a result: there are Armenians in other parts of Asia Minor besides the north-eastern Vilayets in Cilicia, for instance, where Germany has large interests; and if Russia were to have a sphere of influence in Armenia, Germany would claim a similar position in Cilicia; how, His Excellency asked, would Great Britain like to see Germany establish herself in the Levant and thus become a Mediterranean Power. Baron Wangenheim is fond of somewhat random sketches of this kind and I should not have thought it worth while recording his remarks at this length had I not seen from Sir E. Goschen's telegram No. 92 of July 2(³) that the German Minister for Foreign Affairs seems disposed to employ similar arguments which of course cannot be justified if the positions of the two Powers in relation to Asia Minor are even superficially examined.

Of the four Powers, Russia, Great Britain, France and Germany which are directly interested in the future of Turkey in Asia, Germany is certainly the least entitled from the point of view of political, commercial, financial and philanthropic interest, to intervene in Turkish internal affairs, to the point of claiming to have a special sphere of interest allotted to her as a set-off against the recognition of the special interests of Russia in the Armenian provinces of north-eastern Anatolia. It is true that it is only of late that Russia has recognised that the welfare of the Armenian population living in the border provinces of Turkey has a direct bearing on the condition of her Caucasian provinces, but she is now quite alive to the fact and quite legitimately desires to secure her own interests and it is difficult to see how the recognition by the other Powers of these Russian interests can be "creating" a Russian sphere, as Baron Wangenheim asserts. It is merely the acknowledgment of an existing condition of affairs not the creation of a new situation. Germany on the other hand can claim no such position in Cilicia. Cilicia does not lie on the German frontier; on the contrary its position is very remote and in case of war with a great maritime European Power Cilicia would be entirely isolated. Germany has no colony there and her interest in the Armenians is the growth of the last few months. Her interests are solely financial and are locked up in a railway and port, the former of which undertakings enjoys a guarantee from Turkey so that in the event of disturbances part of the consequent loss to the railway would fall on the Turkish Treasury. These seem poor grounds as compared with those of Russia for pretending to claim a sphere of interest, and it appears to me that the first "step towards partition" will be precipitated rather by Germany's threatened but unwarranted demand for a sphere of interest than by the acknowledgment of Russia's undeniable special position towards the Turkish Armenian Provinces. Baron Wangenheim's solicitude for the maintenance of the Turkish Empire appears to be somewhat

(¹) [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King. A copy was sent to the Director of Military Operations.]

(²) [*v. supra*, p. 471, No. 533.]

(³) [*v. supra*, p. 470, No. 532.]

hypocritical and to savour of bluff, the object being to curry favour with the Turks by thwarting the Russian scheme of reforms and to place us in an attitude of opposition to the Russians.

It appears to me also that Germany is accepting a very grave responsibility in opposing the establishment of a special régime for the Armenian provinces, and that by persisting in her opposition she may bring about the very result she professes a desire to prevent. I cannot of course foretell what will be the outcome of the Ambassadors' labours on the reform scheme here, but it is fairly safe to assume that if Germany persists in her present attitude in which she will be supported by her Allies and by the Turks no scheme involving the guarantee of the great Powers for its proper execution will result. In that case the disappointment of the Armenians will be such that unless their present temper and frame of mind changes it is to be seriously apprehended that they may agitate to keep up a state of unrest and perhaps provoke disorders—as did the Bulgars in Macedonia—for the purpose of forcing Russia to intervene. Possibly also the same result might be brought about by overzealous Russian Officials desirous of forcing the hand of their Government.

I have, &c.

CHARLES M. MARLING.

MINUTE.

Mr. Marling's arguments are sound and practical and he recognises German financial interests in Cilicia. The Armenian vilayets from the Berlin Treaty onwards have always been admitted to require special treatment.

A. N.
E. G.

No. 554.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

St. Petersburg, July 13, 1913.

F.O. 92199/19208/13/44.

D. 7·30 P.M.

Tel. (No. 258.)

R. 9·45 P.M.

Your telegram No. 508 of July 9.⁽²⁾

I discussed question of reforms with Minister for Foreign Affairs again yesterday, and though he has not yet given me his final reply I fear that it will be unsatisfactory.

He said that elaboration of effective scheme of reforms for whole Asiatic Turkey would be above capacities of Ambassadors at Constantinople.⁽³⁾ Such a scheme, if elaborated, would remain a paper one, and illusory. Armenian question could not wait while Ambassadors were wasting their time talking. Situation of that province was far more serious and urgent than that of any other. Turkish project could not be taken as base for discussion along with Russian, as it would be as impossible to amalgamate them as fire and water. He was prepared to accept very considerable modifications in Russian scheme, but there must be European control, and he must insist on Christian Governor-General on a council and on participation of local elements in administration. It was in Turkey's own interests that pressure should be brought to bear on her to accept really effective scheme of reforms, as otherwise there would be massacres and disorder followed by Russian intervention. Powers had refused to listen to him when he proposed to bring pressure to bear at Constantinople to stop Turco-Italian war, and consequence had been Balkan war and loss of Turkish Empire in Europe.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Paris by bag; to Berlin (as No. 262); to Vienna (as No. 217); to Rome (as No. 207); to Constantinople (as No. 323). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp 488-9, No. 547.]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 442, No. 494.]

German Ambassador had based his objections to Russian scheme on size of province it was proposed to create, and this difficulty might be perhaps got over by splitting it up into two provinces.

As regards employment of officers of some minor Power, he said that it would take time to get them, and that a few Swedish officers would not prevent massacres.

I urged importance of doing something to prevent massacres, and suggested that Ambassadors should at once discuss appointment of officers as provisional measure, and reminded him that it was only on this condition that you had suspended appointment of British officers. I said also all I could in favour of both Turkish and Russian schemes being considered by Ambassadors, but he maintained that all that Ambassadors could do in that case would be to reject Turkish scheme.

Minister for Foreign Affairs is, I believe, perfectly sincere in declaring that his aim is to maintain integrity of Turkish Empire in Asia, but his views and ours as to best means of obtaining this end are so diametrically opposed that I despair of reconciling them or of persuading him that remedy which he proposes may prove more dangerous than disease.

MINUTES.

I think that it is impossible for us to refuse to discuss the Turkish reform scheme. Hakky Pasha has been informed on your instruction that we are in favour of this course and the refusal of M. Sazonov to permit the discussion will simply block all reforms, as the German G[overnmen]t has taken up a strong line on the question. I think that C[oun]t Benckendorff should be spoken to in this sense and asked to impress on M. Sazonov that some compromise is necessary if German and Turkish opposition is to be overcome and that we are bound to have some regard for Turkish sensibilities if reform is to be successful. Our concession in regard to not sending Gendarmerie officers is to count for nothing and is looked upon as an instalment of further concessions.

L. M.
A. N.

Speak to Count Benckendorff as proposed. See also my minute on No. 32430 ⁽⁴⁾

E. G.

⁽⁴⁾ [v. immediately succeeding document]

No. 555.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 32430/19208/13/44.

Constantinople, D. July 13, 1913, 8.20 P.M.

Tel. (No. 333.) Confidential.

R. July 14, 1913, 1.45 P.M.

Reform schemes.

Postal service being at present slow and uncertain I venture to submit by telegraph following observations from local point of view.

Berlin telegram No. 92 of July 2.⁽²⁾ Presuming that "share" which Germany has in view is Cilicia & Alexandretta it seems difficult to maintain that her interests there are on the same footing as those of Russia in the Armenian provinces on her borders.

Berlin telegram No. 102, of July 9.⁽³⁾ Statement that reforms in six vilayets would excite trouble among Armenians in the other vilayets and among all the various natives will scarcely bear examination. The case of the Armenian population of

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Paris by bag; to Berlin (as No. 273); to Vienna (as No. 227); to Rome (as No. 217); to St. Petersburg (as No. 536). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 470, No. 532.]

⁽³⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 487, No. 546.]

Cilicia is provided for in the Russian scheme as it was in the 1895 project, while in the remainder of Anatolia the population is Turkish with a sprinkling of Armenians and Greeks mainly in the towns.

Conditions vary in various parts of Asiatic Turkey and to provide an administrative system suited to the needs of any district, e.g. the six Armenian provinces, is not to reserve privileged position but only to make a step towards more rational government of the whole Empire: as a matter of fact the first step was taken by the grant of semi-autonomy to the Yemen last year so far with apparently beneficial results.

The need of special treatment is stronger in Kurdo-Armenia than elsewhere and this was first recognized by the Turks themselves in 1877, but it was, as on all subsequent occasions, shelved in favour of general reforms, although the principle was officially admitted by the *Irâdê* of October 20th, 1895,⁽⁴⁾ placing the six vilayets under a single High Commissioner. The Armenians consider that the division of the six vilayets into two provinces as provided by the present Turkish scheme, is a derogation from an acquired right.

In view of the inability shown by the Turks to govern during the last five years without assistance (?) and the state of siege in the capital, the Armenians are convinced that good government in the six vilayets can only be secured by limitation of direct Turkish rule, a principle which the Turks themselves appear partly to admit by their application for European officials. This could be obtained by local foreign control or by a single Governor-General (instead of a temporary High Commissioner and permanent committee of control at Constantinople as in 1895), in whose appointment Europe shall have a voice. The Armenians hold this to be essential and it leaves a margin for bargaining with the Turks as to the nationality and creed of the Governor-General.

As regards the German apprehension that as result of reforms introduced under Russian auspices the six vilayets will become a Russian sphere, persons well acquainted with Armenian disorder believe that a prosperous Armenia is not likely to gravitate towards Russia; the Armenians are at least as independent as the Bulgarians and have no linguistic or religious ties.

Reports from the provinces seem to show that the possibility of Russia acting has served as a deterrent against massacre; but if it is seen here that Germany supported by her allies and by the Turks cannot be induced to abandon her opposition to the far-reaching reforms of the Russian scheme and the fastidious [*sic*] half-measures of general application, then it is to be anticipated that the Armenians and particularly the forward element among them may endeavour to create excesses with a view to forcing Russia's hand.

MINUTES.

Our object is to get Russians and Germans to agree so that there are may be some Armenians left to enjoy the benefits of the reformed administration when it is introduced. With this end in view we might put before the German Gov[er]nmen[t] the arguments used in this telegram in discussing Lord Granville's tel[egram] No. 102. This may help to reconcile them to discussion on the basis of the Russian scheme.

H. N.

July 14, 1913.

R. P. M.

If Germany will discuss the Russian scheme something may be evolved which will be acceptable to all. But unless all the Powers are agreed, Turkey will never accept a scheme proposed by Russia. There will have to be some give and take and M. Sazonov's refusal to discuss the Turkish scheme at all makes for a deadlock. If he will give way on this point, we could approach the Germans. I think, as I said in another minute,⁽⁵⁾ that Count Benckendorff had better be asked to call and impressed with this difficulty.

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. A. & P.*, (1896), XCV, (C. 7923), pp. 290-8. The text of the decree was transmitted with Sir P. Currie's despatch (No. 704), D. October 22, R. October 29, 1895. F.O. 78/4620.]

⁽⁵⁾ [*v. immediately preceding document, min.*]

In the meantime, enquire of Mr. Marling whether all the Ambassadors are now discussing the Russian scheme and with what result. He reported a few days ago that the German and Austrian Ambassadors had agreed to do so. Mr. Marling provides good arguments against the German contentions, but we must get a compromise arranged if anything is to be carried.

L. M.

We should enquire of Mr. Marling whether discussion of the Russian project is taking place, and if so, how it is progressing

A. N.

And when Count Benckendorff next calls the matter can be mentioned to him.

This telegram makes for a scheme of Armenian reforms on basis of 1895 and for taking the Turkish scheme into discussion for the rest of Asiatic Turkey.

E. G.

No. 31872⁽⁶⁾ has just been brought to me—which shows that the dragomans of the Embassies have met to discuss the reform projects but there was a difference of opinion as to whether the Russian or the Turkish reform project should be first tackled. This meeting took place on July 3. We might telegraph to Mr. Marling:—

“Your telegram No. 333 and despatch No. 580⁽⁶⁾ Your observations merit and will receive consideration.

What progress is being made in discussion of reform projects? and is the Turkish being examined in conjunction with the Russian project or what procedure is being followed?”⁽⁷⁾

A. N.

E. G.

⁽⁶⁾ [i. *infra*, p. 504, No. 567, *note* (1)]

⁽⁷⁾ [Sent as telegram (No. 332), of July 16, 1913, D. 10.15 P.M.]

No. 556.

Sir F. Cartwright to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Vienna, July 15, 1913.

P.O. 92619/19208/13/44.

Tel. (No. 107.)

D. 1.50 P.M.

R. 4 P.M.

Your tel[egram] No. 209 of July 10.⁽²⁾

I saw the M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] this morning who told me that he had not yet received text of the Russian proposal for Armenian reforms.⁽³⁾ He expected it any day and would study it carefully, but from conversation with Turkish Ambassador here and from an outline sketch which he had received of the scheme of reforms he felt certain that the Russian proposals would not be acceptable. His impression was that it was too far-reaching and dangerous to the integrity of the Ottoman dominions which both Germany and Austria-Hungary desired to defend. The point of view of Austria-Hungary was that the scheme of reforms should be elaborated with Turkey and not by one Power and then forced upon Turkey. I gathered from what the M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] told me that the Russian M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] had said to the Austrian Ambassador at St. Petersburg that it was essential that a drastic scheme of reforms should be imposed upon Turkey by the Powers for if an inefficient one was brought forward and trouble ensued in Armenia Russia would have to see herself to the restoration of order there. If these were the Russian M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs]'s real views the Austrian M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] said to me that they were very dangerous.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Paris (as No. 279); to Berlin (as No. 268); to Rome (as No. 211); to St. Petersburg (as No. 529); to Constantinople (as No. 326). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [i. *supra*, p. 490, No. 549, and *note* (1).]

⁽³⁾ [There is no reference in *O.L.A.* to this interview, and it is not possible to determine definitely whether the reference is to the *aide-mémoire* mentioned *supra*, p. 492, No. 552, and *encl.*, or, as seems more probable, to the proposals printed *supra*, pp. 455-9, No. 515, *encl.*]

Lord Granville to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Berlin, July 16, 1918.

D. 12.55 P.M.

R. 2.30 P.M.

F.O. 32783/19208/13/44.

Tel. (No. 110.)

Reforms.

Your telegram No. 253 of July 10.⁽²⁾

Russian aide-mémoire was handed to the German Ambassador at St. Petersburg and not telegraphed to embassy here.

I asked the views of the S[ecretary] of S[tate] for F[oreign] A[ffairs] yesterday evening. He replied that the new aide-mémoire appeared to him to contain nothing but phrases and he had once more telegraphed to the German Ambassador at St. Petersburg⁽³⁾ the same views as he has consistently expressed to you through the German Ambassador at London and through H[is] M[ajesty's] Ambassador and me (see my telegram No. 102 of July 9).⁽⁴⁾

I said that I gathered that M. Sazonow insisted on the Russian project being discussed first and asked whether with the object of obtaining unanimity he could not agree to this. He did not think that he could, but he had not realized M. Sazonow's insistence and could wait until M. Sazonow expressed it to him. He considered that the Ambassadors ought certainly to discuss the Turkish scheme first, if only as a recognition of Turkish sovereignty. He would of course be prepared for the insertion of important amendments and for the exercise of pressure if necessary to carry them through, but he objected to the Russian usual policy of immediate pressure even when not really necessary. He repeated his desire for commission of control which he said was in 1895 scheme but was omitted from the present Turkish scheme. He begged me to assure you that he was far from wishing to make difficulties and delays.

MINUTES.

The German G[overnment] evidently thinks that we are anxious that they should give way to M. Sazonow. The permanent Commission of Control alluded to by the German M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] was to have been composed half of Mussulmans and half of non-Mussulmans and was to have been charged with the supervision of the application of the reforms. The Ambassadors were to communicate to this Commission any information or views which they might think necessary.

We might [ask] Mr. Marling his opinion as to the utility of such a Commission.

L. M.

A. N.

We should let the German M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] know the substance of the views we have expressed to St. Petersburg. Draft a tel[egram] suitable for communication at Berlin.⁽⁵⁾

E. G.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Paris (as No. 280); to Vienna (as No. 221); to Rome (as No. 212); to St. Petersburg (as No. 532); to Constantinople (as No. 328). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 490, No. 549, and *note* (1).]

⁽³⁾ [cp. *G.P.*, XXXVIII, pp. 104-5.]

⁽⁴⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 487, No. 546.]

⁽⁵⁾ [v. *infra*, p. 499, No. 559.]

No. 558.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 32976/19208/13/44.

Tel. (No. 535.)

Foreign Office, July 16, 1913.

I said to Russian Ambassador to-day that agreement between the Powers was essential to get any scheme of Reforms adopted by Turkey. To refuse to take Turkish proposal into discussion at all would prejudice chance of getting anything agreed and accepted.

I thought therefore that official attitude should be that Ambassadors at Constantinople were discussing reforms, starting from basis of scheme of 1895 and also taking Turkish scheme communicated to them into consideration.

It can be admitted that there cannot be a perfectly uniform scheme for all provinces.

First object should now be to secure German assent to some scheme; with this secured there will be general agreement. With this object Germany might be asked to state in what respects Russian proposal goes too far and it should be ascertained how far Germany is prepared to go.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Constantinople (No. 330); to Paris (No. 283); to Berlin (No. 271); to Vienna (No. 225); to Rome (No. 215), "for information only." A paraphrase was sent to Count Benckendorff.]

No. 559.

Sir Edward Grey to Lord Granville.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 32788/19208/13/44.

Tel. (No. 276.)

*Foreign Office, July 17, 1913, 7.30 P.M.*Your tel[egram] No. 110.⁽²⁾

You may inform the M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] that I have impressed upon M. Sazonov that two conditions are essential to the success of reform 1 unanimity amongst the Powers 2 acceptance of their scheme by the Ottoman G[overnment] without coercion.

I have advocated the discussion by the Ambassadors of both schemes of reform namely that proposed by Russia or the Armenian Vilayets⁽³⁾ and of the general scheme proposed by Turkey.⁽⁴⁾ It can be admitted that there cannot be a perfectly uniform scheme for all the Provinces and that the most urgent consideration is the adoption of reform in the Armenian Provinces.

I hope that agreement necessary to begin the discussion may be reached on these lines.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to St. Petersburg (No. 542); to Constantinople (No. 339); to Paris (No. 287), "for inform[ation] only."]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 498, No. 557.]

⁽³⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 491-2, No. 552, and *encl.*]

⁽⁴⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 474-9, No. 538, and *encls.*]

No. 560.

Lord Granville to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Berlin, July 18, 1913.

F.O. 38169/19208/13/44.

D. 6.30 P.M.

Tel. (No. 113.)

R. 9 P.M.

Your telegram No. 276 of July 17⁽²⁾: Reforms.

Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs entirely approves of the two conditions which you state to be essential. He has received nothing further from St. Petersburg, but would be quite ready to agree to simultaneous discussion of both schemes of reform.

I ventured to read to him confidentially, stating I had no instructions to do so, and that I was unaware how far you agreed with Mr. Marling's views, some extracts from Constantinople telegram No. 333 of July 13.⁽³⁾ He said that it was very difficult for him to know what was right at this distance, especially as he had never been in Armenia. He appeared to be rather impressed by Mr. Marling's arguments, though he could not see why the Armenians should object to division of six vilayets into (group undecypherable) provinces, and maintained that force which would cause Armenia to gravitate towards Russia was the presence of almost equal numbers of Armenians across frontier.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Paris (as No. 289); to Vienna (as No. 230); to Rome (as No. 221); to St. Petersburg (as No. 544); to Constantinople (as No. 341). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

⁽³⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 495-6, No. 555.]

No. 561.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

St. Petersburg, July 18, 1913.

F.O. 38166/19208/13/44.

D. 8 P.M.

Tel. (No. 267.)

R. 10 P.M.

Your telegram No. 508 of July 9⁽²⁾ and my telegram No. 251 of July 8.⁽³⁾

Aide-mémoire which I have to-day received from Russian Government⁽⁴⁾ observes that Russian project of reforms was drawn up after consultation with British and French representatives at Constantinople, and it takes as far as possible into account previous Turkish laws on subject as well as 1895 scheme.

Aide-mémoire continues that it is a matter of course that Ambassadors can, if they wish, in their discussions take into consideration Turkish scheme recently communicated to Powers.

Russian Government, attaching as it does highest importance to agreement among Powers, is prepared in advance to discuss any amendments to Russian scheme which may be suggested, and will not object if negotiations prove advisability of introducing this or that improvement in its text. Task having been entrusted to Ambassadors at Constantinople, Russian Government consider most practical course would be to give

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Paris (as No. 288); to Berlin (as No. 278); to Vienna (as No. 229); to Rome (as No. 220); to Constantinople (as No. 340). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 488-9, No. 547.]

⁽³⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 486, No. 544.]

⁽⁴⁾ [v. *infra*, pp. 502-3, No. 563, and *encl*]

them a free hand in deciding settlement on these questions, for which a special knowledge of local conditions and daily intercourse with Porte are required.

MINUTE

The Dragomans of all the Embassies are examining together both the Russian and Turkish projects and appear to have been engaged on this useful task for some few days. Had we known this before much telegraphing would have been avoided. We can now leave the matter alone till the Dragomans have reported to their Chiefs and the latter have given us their opinions⁽⁵⁾

A. N.
E. G.

⁽⁵⁾ [The appointment of this committee of Dragomans was reported on June 30, *v. supra*, p. 463, No. 529. For its reports, *cp. infra*, pp. 504-15, No. 567, and *note* (1), and *encl.*]

No. 562.

Sir Edward Grey to Lord Granville.

F.O. 34337/19208/13/44.

(No. 236.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, July 22, 1913.

The German Ambassador gave me to-day the following Memorandum of the German views about reforms in Asiatic Turkey:—

(See paper herewith.)

I said that I would give him a Memorandum of the views that we had expressed in St. Petersburg, which, I thought, had already been made known in Berlin.⁽¹⁾

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

Enclosure in No. 562.

Memorandum.

Confidential.

The Imperial Government have welcomed with satisfaction the Russian initiative concerning the Armenian reforms being convinced that something had necessarily to be done to create settled conditions in this country which has for many decades been suffering from a state of unrest. This initiative has already had the happy effect of demonstrating to Turkey the necessity of reforms and of inducing her to elaborate a project of reforms of her own. However the Russian (Mandelstam-) project of reforms gives rise to objections.

The embodiment of the 6 Turkish Vilayets into a united Armenia, which, moreover would not even include *all* the Armenians, would be the first step towards an ethnological and geographical partition of Asiatic Turkey, for it would hardly be evitable that the other nationalities of Asia Minor, Syria, Arabia too would strive for the same advantages of centralised administration, which would likewise be contrary to M. Sazonow's intentions. Taking this into account and considering that self-determination in matters of administration should after all be left to the own Government of a country, it seems advisable to examine first the *Turkish* project of reforms and to consider and apply it as far as possible. The Imperial Government are of opinion that only in case of the *Turkish* action proving a failure one should insist on

⁽¹⁾ [This memorandum was given to Prince Lichnowsky on July 24. It contained the substance of Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 508) to Sir G. Buchanan of July 9, *v. supra*, pp. 488-9, No. 547, and *note* (1).]

modifications to be made or on the introduction of reforms according to a scheme which would have to be framed by the powers. At present the Imperial Government would only be able to recommend to Turkey to complete her own project according to the Turkish decree of 1895. This complement, the Imperial Government think, would above all have to include the creation of a commission of control, composed half of Turks, half of delegates of the Great Powers and being presided over by a Turkish chairman. Such a commission of control, which would have to examine Armenian complaints and desires and to elaborate informations and instructions for the administrative functionaries, would at the same time give to Turkey the assistance she needs and offer to the Powers the opportunity of a permanent supervision of the way the projected reforms are carried out.

The Imperial Government holds that a Turkish project of reform, completed in that way, would be in every point preferable to the Russian (Mandelstam-) project, the more so, after having been supplemented, if possible, by the introduction of Christian assistants for the superior administrative functionaries provided for by the Turkish decree of 1895.

No. 563.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 84603/19208/13/44.

(No. 223.)

St. Petersburg, D. July 22, 1913.

Sir,

R. July 28, 1913.

With reference to my telegram No. 267 of July 18th last,⁽²⁾ I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of the aide-memoire received from the Russian Government respecting the schemes of reform in Armenia.

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

Enclosure in No. 563.

Aide-mémoire.

L'ambassade Royale a eu l'obligeance de communiquer au Ministère Impérial le télégramme de Son Excellence Sir E. Grey en date du 9 Juillet,⁽³⁾ a. c. concernant la question des réformes en Arménie.

Le Ministère Impérial ayant déjà fait part à l'Ambassade Royale de son point de vue général par l'aide-mémoire en date du 25 Juin/8 JUILLET⁽⁴⁾ croit devoir compléter les observations qui y ont été exposées par ce qui suit.

Le projet présenté par l'Ambassadeur de Russie à Constantinople à ses collègues a été élaboré d'accord avec les Ambassadeurs d'Angleterre et de France.⁽⁵⁾ Il a été autant que possible tenu compte dans ce projet des lois turques précédentes ainsi que du projet élaboré en 1895.

Il va de soi que dans les délibérations des Ambassadeurs à Constantinople on pourra prendre en considération le projet récemment communiqué aux Puissances par la Sublime Porte. En attachant le plus grand prix à l'union entre les Puissances le Gouvernement Impérial est d'avance prêt à discuter tous les amendements qui seraient

⁽¹⁾ [A copy of this despatch was sent to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 500-1, No. 561.]

⁽³⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 488-9, No. 547.]

⁽⁴⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 492, No. 552, *encl.*]

⁽⁵⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 454-9, No. 515, and *encl.*]

présentés à son projet et n'objectera pas, si les débats prouvent l'opportunité d'introduire telle ou telle autre amélioration dans le texte du projet.

Cette tâche étant confiée aux Ambassadeurs à Constantinople, le Ministère Impérial croit qu'il serait plus pratique de leur laisser la liberté de se concerter sur ces questions demandant la connaissance spéciale des conditions locales et un contact journalier avec la Sublime Porte.

St.-Petersbourg, 4/17 July, 1913.

No. 564.

Communication from M. de Prelle de la Nieppe.

F.O. 35736/35736/13/44.

Belgian Legation, London, August 1, 1913.

Au commencement du mois de Juillet, la Sublime Porte a communiqué aux Grandes Puissances le programme des réformes à appliquer en Turquie d'Asie. L'Empire est divisé en six sections d'inspection générale.

Le Gouvernement Ottoman demand au Gouvernement belge des fonctionnaires (Justice, Agriculture et Travaux Publics) qui seraient adjoints à l'Inspecteur Général de la 2^e Section à Smyrne et peut être d'autres fonctionnaires.

Avant d'autoriser ces fonctionnaires à signer leur contrat, le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères désirerait savoir si dans l'opinion de Sir Edward Grey il ne peut pas avoir d'objection à nous prêter à ce que nous demande la Turquie.

1 Août, 1913.

No. 565.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 35736/35736/13/44.

Tel. (No. 297.)

Foreign Office, August 1, 1913, 5.50 P.M.

Belgian Chargé d'Affaires reports that Turkish Gov[ernmen]t have applied to Belgian Gov[ernmen]t for [sic] justice, agriculture and public works to help Inspector-General in 2nd secteur (Smyrna) and perhaps for other officials.⁽²⁾

Before authorising these officials to sign their contracts Belgian Gov[ernmen]t ask whether we have any objection.

¹ Inform Government to which you are accredited and ask their views.⁽³⁾

² What are your views.⁽⁴⁾

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Berlin (No. 291); to Vienna (No. 238); to Rome (No. 228); to St. Petersburg (No. 565); to Constantinople (No. 369). A copy was sent to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

⁽³⁾ [Unsigned marginal note by Mr. Norman: "1 to all except Mr. Marling."]

⁽⁴⁾ [Unsigned marginal note by Mr. Norman: "2 to Mr. Marling only."]

Lord Granville to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Berlin, August 2, 1913.

F.O. 35829/35736/13/44.

D. 7.50 P.M.

Tel. (No. 126.)

R. 10.30 P.M.

Your telegram No. 297 of Aug[ust] 1⁽²⁾ to Paris.

German Minister for Foreign Affairs has no objection to engagement of Belgian officers for Turkey.⁽³⁾

⁽¹⁾ [Copies of this telegram were sent to the Admiralty; to the Director of Naval Intelligence; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

⁽³⁾ [Similar views were expressed by the French Government (Sir F. Bertie's telegram (No. 109) of August 8, D. 11.50 A.M., R. 2.20 P.M. (F.O. 36689/35736/13/44)), and confirmed in a communication from M. de Fleuriau of August 9 (F.O. 37134/35736/13/44); by the Austro-Hungarian Government (Mr Akers Douglas' despatch (No. 116), D. August 12, R. August 14, 1913 (F.O. 37525/35736/13/44)), and by the Russian Government (Sir G. Buchanan's telegram (No. 203) of August 14, D. 6 P.M., R. 10 P.M. (F.O. 37650/35736/13/44)). The Italian Government stated that they had heard nothing of the request and could not give an opinion on the matter without further information (Sir R. Rodd's telegram (No. 130) of August 4, D. 4.18 P.M., R. 10.45 P.M. (F.O. 35849/35736/13/44))]

Mr. Marling, in his telegram (No. 382) of August 4, D. 1.35 P.M., R. 3.45 P.M., stated that it would "be premature to agree to appointment of foreign officials until a definite decision as to reforms has been reached" (F.O. 35854/35736/13/44.)]

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 40170/19208/13/44.

(No. 747.) Very Confidential.

Constantinople, D. August 27, 1913.

Sir:—

R. September 1, 1913.

With reference to my despatches Nos. 589 and 641 of July 4th and July 18⁽¹⁾ respectively I have the honour to transmit to you copies of the *procès-verbaux*⁽²⁾ of the 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and last meetings of the sub-commission appointed by the Embassies of the 6 Powers to examine the Russian draft scheme of reform for the six Armenian provinces in conjunction, as agreed on at the second meeting, with the new Turkish "law of the Vilayets" but taking the former as the basis of the discussion.⁽³⁾

Mr. Fitzmaurice, the first Dragoman of the Embassy, was the British Delegate on the sub-Commission and he has furnished me with a memorandum reviewing the work of the Commission with comments on the attitude of the Powers as exhibited by the language of their delegates on the sub-Commission and examining with great ability and perspicacity the whole present situation of this question. I venture to think that this memorandum, copy of which is enclosed herewith, will be read with great interest.

⁽¹⁾ [Not reproduced. Mr. Marling's despatch (No. 589), D. July 4, R. July, 11, 1913, reported the first meeting of the sub-commission appointed on June 30 (*v. supra*, p. 468, No. 529). The meeting took place on July 3. (F.O. 31872/19208/13/44.) His despatch (No. 641), D. July 22, R. July 28, 1913, transmitted the *procès-verbaux* of the first three meetings of the sub-commission. (F.O. 34697/19208/13/44.) These despatches are not reproduced as Mr. Fitzmaurice's memorandum printed as an enclosure to the present document summarizes sufficiently the work of the sub-commission. For the French account, *v. D.D.F.*, 3^{me} Sér., Vol. VII, p. 292, No. 270; pp. 556-7, No. 515. A full account is given in *G.P.*, XXXVIII, p. 86 *sqq.*]

⁽²⁾ [Not reproduced, as the summary by Mr. Fitzmaurice gives sufficient detail.]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp. 455-9, No. 515, *encl.*; pp. 475-9, No. 538, *encls.*]

I have nothing to add to Mr. Fitzmaurice's observations, but I take leave to express the fear, speaking from a purely local standpoint and in particular having in view the attitude of the Ambassadors of the Triple Alliance here, that so long as His Majesty's Government maintain as essential the two conditions laid down in your telegram to His Majesty's Ambassador at Berlin No. 276 of 17 July,⁽⁴⁾ viz that the reform scheme must be adopted by the Powers unanimously, and that it must be accepted by the Porte without coercion, the success of any scheme embodying the essential principles for efficiency, viz the guarantee of Europe in some shape, and the investment of the European inspectors to be employed in carrying out the reforms with executive authority, is problematic.

The German Ambassador whose sympathy with the Armenians is rather political than philanthropic is well aware that the Young Turks now in power will never willingly consent to accept a scheme based on the above-mentioned principles, and he has no intention of risking Germany's present paramount influence with them by joining in the collective pressure necessary to procure its acceptance; he will, he has more than once told me, continue in the line adopted by his delegate in the subcommission of urging further amendments on the Turkish law, but will steadily resist the adoption of the essential features of the Russian draft, on the ground that their adoption will convert Armenia into a Russian sphere of influence and so pave the way to the partition of Turkey. Baron Wangenheim will be obediently followed by his Austro-Hungarian and Italian colleagues, and thus presuming that the French Ambassador and I are authorised to decline to accept the illusory Turco-German scheme and to give our general support to the Russian Ambassador, the Embassies will be divided into two equal groups and a deadlock will ensue, the final issue of which will probably be that the Turkish law of the Vilayets, modified, under German pressure and as a sop to Russia, so as to render it capable of special application in the Armenian provinces, will be put into operation as representing and fulfilling the wishes of Europe.

Such a result would I submit be eminently unsatisfactory and I venture to think that our best course, if and when it appears that it is inevitable, would be to decline to associate ourselves with it and, by withdrawing from the discussions altogether leave the responsibility for any consequences that might ensue to fall where it properly belongs namely with the German Embassy. We should thus lay the German Embassy under the moral obligation to bring pressure on the Turks to show by practical results that their scheme was sufficient and adequate. Something may perhaps be done towards rendering the lot of the Armenians more tolerable, life, honour and even property may be made more secure, but such results which might have satisfied the Armenians in the Hamidian era will be very far from meeting their legitimate aspirations under a constitutional régime to be free to develop their national existence on a footing of equality with their Moslem fellow subjects, and the Armenian question will have come but little nearer a definite solution.

In the situation considered above I have said little about Russia because *ex hypothesi* Russia has merely one vote among six. But it seems to me doubtful whether Russia will be content to accept that position, which is indeed very much what she occupies to-day in the question of Adrianople.⁽⁵⁾ In his telegram No. 307 Urgent of the 18th instant,⁽⁶⁾ Sir G. Buchanan observed that Russia has given way on many occasions in the last few months but that she cannot allow Turkey to go on defying her without serious loss of prestige. If Russia could score some diplomatic success in the Adrianople question she might be content to be *coulante* when the acute stages of the Armenian reforms question are reached. But at the moment of writing it looks rather as if in the former matter she would be constrained to make one more sacrifice to the altar of the Concert of Europe so that the desire to do something

⁽⁴⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 499, No. 559.]

⁽⁵⁾ [On this subject, v. *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II), pp. 1109-10, SUBJECT INDEX, sub ADRIANOPLE.]

⁽⁶⁾ [v. *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II), pp. 987-8, No. 1242.]

to retrieve her diminished prestige is likely to be enhanced rather than abated. Moreover Monsieur Sazonow may very well feel that his own position requires that in a question where Russia has taken the leading part, he should enforce respect even at the cost of material pressure.

That pressure it may be taken for granted would be applied at some point or points in Northern Anatolia and that Germany would at once see or pretend to see in it a menace to the maintenance of the Turkish Empire. Germany is probably quite sincere in her protestations that she does not desire to precipitate the partition of Asiatic Turkey, for she still wants time to strengthen and enlarge her claim to a share, and perhaps also to allow her ally Italy to peg out a claim in the S[outh]-W[estern] corner. But it is hardly conceivable that to prevent premature partition she is prepared to risk a serious rupture with Russia where a much simpler means lies to her hand, namely, to advise her Young Turk friends to make such concessions as will avert coercion by Russia. Indeed if Germany is not prepared to place an absolute veto on action by Russia she has no alternative, for it would not suit her interests to see the present Government in Turkey over which she exercises so great influence, suffer a rude blow to their prestige by having to yield in the end to Russian pressure. The German Embassy would also have an expected opportunity of proving in practice the sincerity of its sympathy with the Armenians.

According to the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador, the German Ambassador is sure that France for financial reasons and Great Britain out of consideration for the Moslems of India and Egypt have restrained Russia from active pressure in the Adrianople question, and it is reasonable to expect that relying on the same restraining influence Baron Wangenheim will be tempted to regard any Russian preparations as mere bluff, and would not desist from his veiled support of the Turks. If however Russia should decide that, *coûte que coûte*, her national prestige demands that she make her will respected it is clear that if a very dangerous situation is not to be allowed to develop, His Excellency will have to be convinced from the first that Russia is in earnest and that she will enjoy the benevolent neutrality of the other Powers of the Entente.

I have, &c.

CHARLES M. MARLING.

Enclosure in No. 567.

Memorandum by Mr. Fitzmaurice.

British Embassy, Constantinople, August 10, 1913.

In submitting the eight *procès-verbaux* of the sub-commission appointed to study the Russian draft scheme of Armenian reforms⁽⁷⁾ conjointly with the Turkish reforms communicated to the foreign Missions by the Sublime Porte in its notes No. 75 of July 1st⁽⁸⁾ and No. 76 of July 5th,⁽⁹⁾ I beg to offer the following observations.

The first instructions received by me were in the form of a note from the Austrian Embassy requesting me to meet my colleagues there "to study the Russian draft scheme." The Porte, prompted apparently by the Austrian and German Embassies, hurried forward their reforms obviously to forestall the Russian scheme, and, as recorded in the first *procès-verbal* of July 3rd, at our first meeting the Triple Alliance representatives insisted, according to their instructions, on taking the Turkish reforms as the basis of the discussion. As set forth in the minutes of the second sitting on July 7th, this attitude was modified and it was agreed to discuss both schemes conjointly, taking the Russian as "point de départ."

I began by giving a general support to the Russian draft proposals, but it subsequently became clear from the telegraphic correspondence between H[is] M[ajesty's] Government and St. Petersburg that the former were not prepared to go beyond the

⁽⁷⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 454-9, No. 515, *encl.*]

⁽⁸⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 475-9, No. 538, *encls.*]

⁽⁹⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 466, *Ed. note.*]

1895 reforms. As both the Russian draft scheme and the Turkish reforms of July 1st go beyond those of 1895 my position was somewhat embarrassing. As, however, the Russian draft proposals, inasmuch as they are based on the principle of special reforms for the six vilayets inhabited by the Armenians, were more on the lines of the 1895 reforms than were the fresh Turkish general reforms for the whole Empire, I gave a general non-committal support to the Russian scheme and reduced my share in the discussion to a minimum, confining myself to a few somewhat anodyne remarks. As a matter of fact the proceedings practically resolved themselves into a duel between the Russian (M. Mandelstam) and the German (Dr. Schoenberg), the latter being at times seconded by the Austrian, obviously by preconcerted arrangement.

As is well known, the trite saying "men, not measures" applies to all schemes for introducing reforms, i.e. good government, into Turkey. Most bookshelves in Turkey are littered with laws, reforms and projects for reforms. The worse than negative results attained so far come from the lack among the Turks of men of character and a sense of impartiality to apply them, especially when it is a case of deciding between Moslems, like the Kurds, and non-Moslems, like the Armenians. The Turks themselves have to a certain extent recognised this deficiency by applying for European officials &c. The essence of the Russian draft scheme is contained in the 1st, 2nd and 22nd Articles, all directed to supply the defect of any Turkish reforms, viz. the principle of foreign executive control. The Triple Alliance members of the sub-commission agreed (*procès-verbal* of the seventh sitting of July 23rd) to the necessity for foreign control aimed at in Art[icle] 22 of the Russian draft, but strongly demurred to the principle of veiled *executive* control for the six Armenian provinces underlying the 1st and 2nd Articles, proposing a single Governor General, Ottoman or foreign, appointed by the Sultan *with the consent* of the Powers. The same principle is enunciated in the fifth paragraph of the Note of October 12th, 1895,⁽¹⁰⁾ addressed to the Porte by the Ambassadors of the Triple Entente Powers, who therein claimed the right to object to the appointment of any Vali (in the six provinces) whose character or antecedents showed him to be wanting in the requirements specified by the Porte.

The criticisms of the German and Austrian members, as set forth in the *procès-verbaux* of the second and third meetings, seemed mainly inspired by the desire to merge or swamp any *special* reforms for the six Armenian vilayets in *general* reforms for the Empire, and to be based on the notion that a special régime for the six vilayets tended to create a Russian sphere. They argued that the Russian draft scheme meant a serious encroachment on, or diminution of, the Sultan's sovereign rights, but their objections were theoretical and sounded unreal. If the Governor General is to be a foreigner to enter the Turkish service, there would seem to be no greater derogation of sovereign rights in consulting the Powers as to his choice than in asking foreign Governments to select and lend foreign inspectors, specialists, &c., while if he is to be an Ottoman subject, the sovereign rights of the Ottoman Government do not seem to have been seriously impaired by the arrangements for the appointment of the Governor of the Lebanon, where the existing régime, though imperfect, has relieved the Porte of anxieties. It would seem of urgent and vital necessity that the Porte should be similarly relieved of the impossible task of administering the Kurd-Armenian provinces through the ordinary machinery of the Turkish Government, even if amended as proposed by the new reforms. The German representatives urged that it would require extraordinary pressure to induce the Ottoman Government to accept the proposal for a Governor General appointed by the Porte with the consent of the

⁽¹⁰⁾ [Sir P. Currie's despatch (No. 669), D. October 10, R. October 14, 1895, enclosed a list of the "provisions" which the Ambassadors of France, Russia and Great Britain had agreed to recommend to their Governments as necessary. The sixth provision asserted "The right of the Ambassadors to remonstrate against the appointment of incapable, dishonest, or fanatical Valis." (F.O. 78/4619) Sir P. Currie's telegram (No. 493) of October 14, 1895, D. 10.20 P.M., reported that the three Ambassadors had communicated these additional demands to Said Pasha on the 13th. (F.O. 78/4633.) *cp. A. & P.*, (1896), XCV, (C.7923), pp. 285-6.]

Powers. I think this is an exaggeration, and that, if the Embassies of the Triple Alliance could rid themselves of the notion that the realisation of the Russian proposal means the creation of a Russian sphere, convince themselves that its adoption is in the best interests of the Ottoman Government, and join with the Embassies of the Triple Entente in sincerely urging its acceptance on the Porte, no greater pressure would be required than in the case of the foreign control which they are ready to press the Porte to admit. The form of control admitted by Art[icle] 32 of the 1895 reforms,⁽¹¹⁾ viz. the right of the foreign Missions to communicate, through their dragomans, to the Commission of Control sitting at the Porte, "les avis, communications et renseignements qu'elles jugeront nécessaires," was valueless and remained a dead letter. The form set forth in the minutes of the seventh sitting of July 23rd, viz. that the Governor General (Russian draft scheme) or the foreign inspectors general (Turkish scheme) should communicate direct with the doyen of the six Ambassadors, who would circularise such communications and, if necessary, summon a meeting of his colleagues who, after discussion of the matter at issue, would agree, or not, to make a joint or identic communication to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, savours of the cumbersome methods which proved so ineffectual in the case of the Macedonian reforms. As far as my experience of Turkish ways goes, I have no hesitation in expressing the opinion that a Governor General in whose appointment the Powers had a voice would have more authority, and consequently be a better instrument of control, than that implied in the communications of the foreign inspectors to the Doyen of the Diplomatic Corps &c. The latter system is something and may be better than none, but the representations of the foreign Missions based on the reports of a Governor General who was, to a certain extent, their nominee would have more weight than in the case of reports from the foreign inspectors.

The reforms of 1895 had as framework the six vilayets with six valis and an Inspector General or High Commissioner for the six provinces. The present Russian draft proposal is framed on the six vilayets (reduced in area) under one Governor General (Turkish: "vali-umumi") as opposed to the Turkish reforms of July 1st and July 5th, which split up the six vilayets into two sectors (3rd and 5th) with the addition of the mainly Turkish vilayet of Trebizond (thus reducing the numerical proportion of Armenians), and provide a governing body of seven Valis and two foreign Inspectors, all appointed by the Ottoman Government. The Russian draft scheme is thus much simpler and consequently more suited to the "special wants of the provinces inhabited by the Armenians."

To the possible objection that the six vilayets constitute a unit too unwieldy to be administered by one Governor General, it may be pointed out that before 1878 the "eyalet" (province) of Erzeroum was of about the same area, that the Armenian provinces were in 1878 designedly broken up into exceptionally small units to enable the Ottoman Government to deal more effectually with the Armenian population by process of elimination, and, that while the united six vilayets have a superficies of some 200,000 square kilometres, the area of the vilayet of Basra is 138,000 square kilometres while that of the vilayet of Bagdad is over 140,000 square kilometres. Again, the Porte's Note of Oct[ober] 20th, 1895,⁽¹²⁾ communicating the scheme of reforms for the six vilayets, constituted, so to speak, the official Turkish geographical definition of the vague wording of Art[icle] 61 of the Treaty of Berlin, viz. "provinces inhabited by the Armenians."⁽¹³⁾ The "six vilayets" are thus considered by the Armenians as an "acquired right" of which it is not easy to deprive them by splitting the area up into two sectors or swamping Armenian reforms in general reforms for the Ottoman Empire.

⁽¹¹⁾ [Sir P. Currie's despatch (No. 694), D. October 17, R. October 21, 1895, enclosed a copy of the Act embodying the reforms. The quotation given above is a summary of the provision in Article 32. (F.O. 78/4620.) *cp. A. & P.*, (1896), XCV, (C.7923), pp. 287 and 293.]

⁽¹²⁾ [Sir P. Currie's despatch (No. 704), D. October 22, R. October 29, 1895, enclosed the *note verbale* from the Porte of October 20. (F.O. 78/4620.) *cp. A. & P.*, (1896), XCV, (C.7923), p. 288.]

⁽¹³⁾ [*v. Hertslet: Map of Europe by Treaty*, Vol. IV, p. 2796.]

It would be impossible, and risky to endeavour, to eradicate from the Armenian mind the idea of special reforms to which treaty obligations and the sufferings of the last thirty-five years give them a title, and, while humouring the susceptibilities of the Turkish Government, it would be unwise to ignore the wishes and expectations of the Armenians. The Turkish device of staving off special reforms by promising or initiating general reforms has been practised so often that the Armenians have little or no faith in the present general reforms. At the sitting of the Berlin Congress of July 10th, 1878, the Ottoman delegates, when the desiderata of the Armenian deputation came under discussion, succeeded in getting the matter shelved by representing that the Armenians would have their share in the general reforms promised for the whole Ottoman Empire.⁽¹⁴⁾ The Ottoman Minister for Foreign Affairs, in his reply of July 5th, 1880, to the British Ambassador's written representations concerning Armenian reforms, stated that the Porte was studying a general law to be applied generally to all the provinces of Asiatic Turkey, and wound up with the vague expression "l'introduction successive des réformes dans les provinces du Kurdistan et d'Anatolie, habitées aussi par les Arméniens."⁽¹⁵⁾ Similarly the reforms for Turkey in Europe advocated by Lord Salisbury when at Constantinople in 1876⁽¹⁶⁾ were shelved by the proclamation of the Constitution for the whole Empire, while the revival of the constitution in 1908 was mainly motivated by the desire to forestall the reforms for Macedonia alleged to have been decided on at Reval.⁽¹⁷⁾ These and other instances of the merging of special reforms in schemes of general reforms have perhaps not unnaturally rendered the Armenians sceptical as to the efficacy of the present Turkish scheme as a remedy for their special grievances.

The repeated failures to carry out the reforms stipulated by the Treaty of Berlin and the Convention of Cyprus coupled with the methods of slow or wholesale "elimination" of which the Armenians have been the victims during the last thirty-five years have driven many of them to join or form revolutionary societies. These contributed largely to the revival of the Constitution in 1908 and the overthrow of the Sultan Abdul Hamid, only to find their services requited by the wholesale massacres at Adana in April 1909.⁽¹⁸⁾ The recent massacre of Armenians at Rodosto and Malgara, coming after the heavy and loyal sacrifices of men &c. by the Armenians during the Balkan war, has further helped to engender a desperate frame of mind among the extremists who, in the event of another failure of Europe to ensure the execution of real and tangible reforms, may resort to methods of a nature to compel

⁽¹⁴⁾ [v. *B.F.S.P.*, Vol. 69, pp. 1052-60.]

⁽¹⁵⁾ [A note from Abeddin Pasha to Musurus Bey, dated July 5, 1880, was communicated to Lord Granville on July 7. A copy was sent to Mr. Goschen in Lord Granville's despatch (No. 243) of July 15, 1880. (F.O. 78/3075.) *cp.* also text transmitted by Mr. Goschen in his despatch (No. 122), D. July 6, R. July 13, 1880. (F.O. 78/3089).]

⁽¹⁶⁾ [For the British records of the Conference of Constantinople of December 1876, *cp. A. & P.*, (1877), XCI, (C. 1641), pp. 1-390. The original correspondence is in F.O. 78/2674-2689. The text of the Sultan's reform proclamation of September 10, 1876, is given in *B.F.S.P.*, Vol. 68, pp. 807-9.]

⁽¹⁷⁾ [*cp. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. V, pp. 249-60, *Extract from Annual Report for Turkey for the year 1908*. For the meeting at Reval, *v. ibid.*, pp. 232-46, Chapter XXXVII.]

⁽¹⁸⁾ [An account of these massacres is contained in Sir G. Lowther's *Annual Report for Turkey for the year 1909* (enclosure in despatch (No. 55), D. January 31, R. February 7, 1910). Sir G. Lowther states that the first incident took place on the night of April 14, and that "during the whole of the 15th and 16th the place was given over to complete chaos, murder, theft, and robbery." Major Doughty Wylie, British vice-consul at Mersina, arrived early on the 15th and tried to stop the fighting. He was wounded, and two American missionaries were killed. "On the 16th the ferik had committed the fatal mistake of calling out the reserves, who, unrecognised in their ordinary clothes, joined in the fighting, and it was only on the 17th that the vali and Major Doughty Wylie were at length able to prevail on the Moslem notables and hodjas to agree to make peace with the Armenian priests and civilians. From the morning of the 17th the work of rescue and relief began, and by the 19th the town of Adana was quiet again, and though the state of affairs remained serious for some time longer, the arrival about the 25th of several British and foreign war-ships at Mersina and Alexandretta did much towards restoring the confidence of the non-Moslem population. But the movement started there was spreading far and wide over the neighbouring districts." (F.O. 371/1002. 4235/4235/10/44.)]

Russian intervention, the evil to Turkey which the Germans profess to be anxious to avoid. As regards the idea steadily fostered here by the Germans that a semi-autonomous régime for the six vilayets will create a special Russian sphere, Armenians who are in touch with German circles here cannot believe in German professions on the point or that Germans, who are such thorough students of local conditions, can be blind to the fact that the Armenians are perhaps of all the races in the Caucasus and in the Near East the least Russifiable, or amenable to Russian influence, and that a prosperous and contented Armenia, far from gravitating towards Russia, will in all probability develop the opposite tendency.

The same mistaken notion in the case of the Bulgarians largely influenced the policy of the British Government some 35 years ago and led to the restoration of Macedonia to Turkey, thus occasioning three decades of strife, disorder and insurrection culminating in the recent enormous loss of life while overburdening Turkey with a task which unduly strained her energies, finances, &c. and ultimately proved insuperable. At the time foreigners who knew the Bulgarians at close quarters expressed the opinion that they would prove anything but amenable to Russian influence, as indeed was proved by the subsequent history of Bulgaria, especially during the Stambouloffist régime.

That the creation of a semi-autonomous province in Eastern Anatolia would lead to the break up of Asiatic Turkey would also seem to be a fallacy. In 1908, when the Committee of Union and Progress was dealing with the problem of Yemen, where I had spent three years, I was consulted by one of the leading Young Turks as to the schemes of semi-autonomy then under consideration. While naturally refraining from giving an official opinion on an internal matter of such importance, I privately expressed the view that, owing to the local climatic conditions, the race and creed problems, and the geographical inaccessibility of the country, any attempt to administer Yemen on the same lines as Konieh, Smyrna, &c. was doomed to failure. They proceeded, however, to rule Yemen on a centralised system, with the result that a fresh and costly rebellion broke out, and it was subsequently decided to grant the province a semi-autonomous régime. Since then, despite the Italian war and foreign intrigues with Seid Idris, the relations between Yemen and the Turkish Government have enormously improved to the advantage and strengthening of the central Turkish Government, while, although the population of Yemen is Arab, the creation of semi-autonomous conditions there has not had a disintegrating echo in the other large Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire. Similarly the Kurdo-Armenian provinces, which are almost entirely non-Turkish, are climatically and topographically different from Western Anatolia, and are geographically far from accessible from Constantinople, would, if endowed with a semi-autonomous system of government, cease to be a constant drain and source of anxiety to the central government, which would thus be correspondingly consolidated.

Even admitting the hypothesis that the six vilayets become a special Russian preserve, this would not seem a reason why the rest of the Empire should be partitioned, unless some other Power has territorial designs on Asiatic Turkey. Intelligent Armenians in touch with Germans here are convinced that the special solicitude that Germany has recently developed for the Armenians, and particularly in the vilayet of Adana (Cilicia), is to be explained by Germany's intention of seizing that province in certain contingencies. They believe that when Germany has equalised matters with the British fleet and the Austro-Italian navies have become strong enough to dominate the Mediterranean, Germany will throw off the mask of friendship for Turkey and deal with Cilicia and Alexandretta as she dealt with Shantung and Kiaochow, while Italy will take the portion of South Asia Minor between Antalia and the mainland opposite Rhodes, and Russia will be allowed to annex the Eastern Anatolian provinces, but that until Germany and her consorts of the Triple Alliance are navally prepared, they are reluctant that a special Russian sphere should be created in Kurdo-Armenia.

As a choice between Russia and Germany, Armenians are not favourably disposed

to the latter. They have not forgotten her callous attitude during the Armenian massacres of 1895-96 and say that the Bagdad Railway concession was obtained by Germany "at the price of Armenian blood." They do not believe in the sincerity of Germany's present interest in the Armenian question and are averse to her acquiring Cilicia, being apprehensive that Germany, as in Posen, might dispossess the Armenians to supplant them by German colonists, whereas Russia has never introduced Russian colonists into the Caucasus since she acquired it in 1809.

In November last, after the Balkan victories appeared to have solved Art[icle] 23 of the Treaty of Berlin concerning Macedonia and Crete,⁽¹⁹⁾ the Armenians began to have expectations that the moment had perhaps come for the execution of Art[icle] 61 of the Treaty of Berlin. To some of them who approached me on the subject I said that it would be unwise to hope for much until Austria had demobilised. When, after the Committee's coup d'état of January 23rd last,⁽²⁰⁾ Hakki Pasha proceeded to London, it was represented in Young Turkey circles here that England was reverting to Lord Beaconsfield's policy of 1878, that she was now to be "bought" by concessions at Koweit and the Persian Gulf on the lines of the cession of Cyprus, and that general reforms, as opposed to the special ones promised by Art[icle] 61 of the Treaty of Berlin and the Cyprus Convention,⁽²¹⁾ were to be again promised. The Armenians became nervous as to Hakki Pasha's mission and the new schemes of reform, which, they had reason to believe, had been prompted by Germany in her anxiety to forestall Armenian reforms under Russian auspices and to conceal Russo-German antagonism in Asia Minor by introducing English reforming officials. The Armenians argued that the mission of such British officials sent to Armenia through indirect German suggestion and in an anti-Russian sense could not be welcome to Russia, and that evil instead of reforms would consequently accrue to the Armenians, as in 1895, when Russia suspected that England's real object was to create a second Bulgaria as a buffer state on her Caucasus border. Armenians are firmly convinced that only harm can come to them when England and Russia do not see eye to eye in their question.

The basic facts of the Turkish problem are that Turkish rule was founded on brute force with an Islamic incentive while the Turk lived on the subject races, Christian and Arab Moslem. Under modern Western conditions of equality and justice he feels that he will go to the wall while the subject races will progress and become his superiors. This is why, during the last five years, under a constitutional government, he has governed by the state of siege with the machinery of secret and irresponsible courts martial and had recourse to occasional political assassinations. To the non-Turkish races this system has spelt "Turkification," and inspired them with the conviction that, as the Turk is unable to govern himself in the capital, he is still less fitted to govern non-Turks in the outlying provinces. The Arabs have partly succeeded in eliminating direct Turkish rule by insisting with success that all officials in their country shall know Arabic. The Kurds and Armenians, although antagonised, have the same tendencies. The reforms that might have sufficed in 1878 were inadequate in 1895, and those which might have met the situation then are insufficient in 1913 after five years of professed constitutional liberties. While wishing to remain Ottoman the Armenians feel the necessity for a diminution or cessation of direct Turkish rule in their provinces, or, in other words, a special decentralised régime as opposed to being directly under the central system of government. The present Committee of Union and Progress Government have adopted the decentralisation policy of their political opponents, the "Ententistes," but many fear that they have not quite changed their nature.

It is curious that the idea of autonomy for the Armenian provinces was first suggested by the Turks themselves. Recently, when the Bulgarian army threatened the capital, the Turks were in a state of abject terror. Similarly, when the Russians

⁽¹⁹⁾ [v. Hertlet: *Map of Europe by Treaty*, Vol. IV, p. 2779.]

⁽²⁰⁾ [cp. *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (II), pp. 438-9, No. 545.]

⁽²¹⁾ [v. Hertlet: *Map of Europe by Treaty*, Vol. IV, p. 2796 and pp. 2722-3.]

approached Constantinople in 1877, they were taking refuge in Christian and foreign houses, and imagining that the Russians would retain the Eastern Anatolian provinces, prompted the Armenians to suggest to the Russians a scheme of administrative autonomy under the guarantee of a Russian occupation. When, however, the Disraeli Government brought Moslem troops from India to Malta and sent the British fleet up to Constantinople, the Turks suddenly changed their manner, and, during the San Stefano negotiations, refused to entertain any question of autonomy for Armenia, with the result that only a promise of "amelioration and reforms" was embodied in Art[icle] 16 of the Treaty of San Stefano.⁽²²⁾ At the Congress of Berlin the clause concerning a Russian occupation as a guarantee for the reforms was, with British support, suppressed. With the arrival of Moslem Indian troops at Malta the Armenian question, like other Near Eastern problems, began to be affected by the Indian Mohammedan argument. Again in 1895 when there was question of exercising naval pressure on the ex-Sultan to induce him to accept the reforms for Armenia, the British Government hesitated to send up the fleet partly because it was believed that the Indian Muhammedans would resent such forcible methods of coercion. The result was disastrous to the Armenians.

When I was Commissioner for the Aden Hinterland Boundary and occasions arose where a show or use of force was necessary, the Indian Muhammedan argument and Panislamism were used by the Turks and Arabs, who on two occasions threatened a "jihad." I took no notice of such manœuvres, knowing that it was mere bluff. In like manner, during the Akaba question, the ex-Sultan used Panislamism to frighten us both here and in Cairo. It was ignored and no untoward results ensued.

Under the new régime Panislamism is run by atheists and devotees of Voltaire to scare the Powers having Moslem subjects, while the Indian Mohammedan agitation, as in the case of Adrianople, is mainly wirepulled by Ottoman Red Crescent agencies and is in great part artificial. If tenderness for Indian Moslem sentiment, real and artificial, is to deter us from bringing pressure to bear to induce the Ottoman Government, in its own best interests, to apply a radical remedy to the Armenian question, as stipulated between England and Turkey in virtue of the Cyprus Convention it would almost seem better that England should completely disinterest herself in the matter. Half measures and palliatives seem destined to do harm both to Turkey and to her Armenian population.

The present rulers of Turkey have a more modern and progressive conception of government than the camarilla of the old régime. The question is whether the instinct of self-preservation in the matter of Turkish hegemony will not deter them from carrying out their good intentions or promises in the essential points of equality and justice. The sub-commission to study the Russian draft proposals and the new Turkish scheme were in favour, e.g. of the gendarmerie and police in the six vilayets being half Moslem and half Christian, or being recruited on the basis of the local proportion of both elements. There are at least 500,000 Ottoman non-Moslems in Constantinople out of a population of about 1,250,000, and yet, after five years of equality, not one per cent. of the police and gendarmerie are non-Moslems. It is to be anticipated that they will defeat or find means of evading the execution of any scheme for recruiting these forces on a basis of equality or proportionately in the six Eastern Anatolian vilayets.

After having, so to speak, decapitated the Russian draft scheme,⁽²³⁾ the representatives of the Triple Alliance, as recorded in the seventh procès-verbal of July 23rd, suggested as amendments to the Turkish reforms of July 1st and July 5th a series of proposals taken mainly from the Russian draft proposals, the object being to "cut the ground from under" the Russian draft scheme.

Among these amendments figure the principle of foreign control already dwelt upon; the abolition of the Kurdish light cavalry regiments (ex-Hamidieh); the official

⁽²²⁾ [More properly "improvements and reforms," v. Hertslet: *Map of Europe by Treaty*, Vol. IV, p. 2686.]

⁽²³⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 454-9, No. 515, *encl.*]

use of Armenian and Kurdish in addition to Turkish; the adoption of proportional representation in the different services in vilayets where the non-Moslems are numerous; the exclusion of nomads from the franchise; and the urgent settlement of the question of restitution to Armenians in the Eastern Anatolian vilayets of lands usurped by the Kurds.

In 1895 various solutions of the Hamidieh cavalry difficulty were considered. Its abolition is the only remedy and indispensable to any reform.

As regards the official use of Armenian and Kurdish it would seem but natural now that a like concession has been made in the case of Arabic in the Arab provinces of the Empire. The Triple Alliance representatives have apparently inadvertently forgotten to restrict the concession to the Kurdo-Armenian provinces and, according to their statement set forth in the seventh *procès-verbal*, the concession would apply to the whole Turkish Empire; but presumably they did not intend it to apply to places like Constantinople, Smyrna, &c., where there are also large Armenian communities.

As will appear from the fourth *procès-verbal* of July 12 (discussion of Art[icle] 4 of the Russian draft proposals), from the fifth *procès-verbal* of July 16 (discussion of Art[icle] 8), and from other parts of the minutes of the proceedings, the German and other representatives of the Triple Alliance were in favour of proportional as opposed to equal representation for Armenians and Mussulmans. Theoretically their contention is incontrovertible, but in practice the local populations have long been accustomed to the principle of equality, and even in small districts where one of the two elements constitutes but a very small minority, equality would correspond better to the existing notions of the population on the subject, while the equality basis, as argued by M. Mandelstam, has the further practical advantage of removing the religious factor from the area of possible strife and contention, especially in the case of the provincial and other assemblies. Furthermore, in primitive countries like Eastern Anatolia, where statistics are not obtainable and where accuracy in figures and numbers is out of the question, any attempt to establish the true proportional basis would lead to endless disputes and discussions and probably be found impracticable for years to come.

The withholding of the franchise from the nomad Kurds (Art[icle] 16 of the Russian draft scheme) would act as an incentive to their becoming settled, and thus remedy one of the fruitful sources of trouble and unrest in the vilayets of Van, Bitlis and Diarbekr.

The last point which the Triple Alliance suggested should be embodied in the Turkish scheme, viz. that the question of lands usurped by the Kurds should be settled on the basis of restitution or compensation (Art[icle] 17 of the Russian draft scheme)⁽²⁴⁾ is one that was dealt with in Art[icle] 26 of the proposals of the three Ambassadors in 1895⁽²⁵⁾ and in Art[icle] 29 of the Reform Decree of Oct[ober] 20th, 1895.⁽²⁶⁾ This point has been persistently evaded, under the old régime and that of the "Young Turks," and is, to a great extent, the touchstone of Armeno-Turkish relations and of the genuineness of Turkish reforms in Armenia. The Turkish Government, after the Treaty of Berlin, realising that a sense of nationality cannot easily live without a peasantry, and that if it succeeded in uprooting the Armenian peasantry from the soil and driving them into the towns or out of the country, it would in great part rid itself of the Armenians and the Armenian question, condoned and encouraged Kurdish usurpation of Armenian lands. This retail process was repeated on a wholesale scale after the big massacres of 1895-96. After the revival of the Constitution in 1908, large numbers of Armenians returned, especially from the Caucasus, and, though the Committee of Union and Progress repeatedly promised to

⁽²⁴⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 459, No. 515, *encl.*]

⁽²⁵⁾ [*cp.* enclosure in Sir P. Currie's despatch (No. 657), D. October 7, R. October 11, 1895. F.O. 78/4619.]

⁽²⁶⁾ [*cp.* enclosure in Sir P. Currie's despatch (No. 704), D. October 22, R. October 29, 1895. F.O. 78/4620.]

deal with the matter, especially in the case of Armenians who are in possession of the title-deeds of their lands, nothing has been done. Despite the fact that the Armenians have loyally assisted the "Young Turks," the latter, during the last five years, could not spare, out of some £40,000,000 which they have practically squandered on military armaments, the £250,000 which would have amply sufficed to indemnify the Armenians or Kurds, as the case might be. This failure to settle the usurped lands question has been interpreted by the Armenians as evidence of bad faith on the part of the Committee, and of their secret intention to persist in the old methods of breaking up the peasantry. As appears from the *procès-verbal* of the sixth meeting, the German and Austrian representatives at first argued that this question should be left to the working of the existing laws and the special efforts of the Inspector-General, but finally agreed that the matter should be dealt with as "urgent."

Art[icle] 12 of the Russian draft proposals, advocating "regional" military service in time of peace in the six vilayets, was vigorously combated by the German and Austrian representatives on the ground that such a measure was essentially one of an autonomous province, that, applied to the six vilayets, it would interfere with the scheme of defence of the whole Empire and would constitute a serious encroachment on the Sultan's sovereign rights as supreme Commander-in-Chief in times of peace and war.

The Government has admitted the principle in the case of the Arab vilayets, and there would consequently seem to be no valid reason why it should not be adopted in the six Kurdo-Armenian provinces.

The German representative was all along very insistent on the application of the reforms and the foreign control to the regions inhabited by "compact masses of Armenians," his object evidently being to secure the inclusion of Cilicia in the area of reforms. As all except the sixth of the zones enumerated in the Porte's Note of July 5th contain "compact masses of Armenians" while the Porte's Note of July 1st speaks of *foreign* inspectors for the Eastern Anatolian sectors only, I pointed out that it would be almost impossible to conceive that the *Ottoman* Inspector-General for, e.g., the sector comprising the vilayets of Smyrna, Konieh and Adana, should be expected to send copies of all his reports to the doyen of the Diplomatic Corps. As an issue from this dilemma the German representative suggested, as recorded in the seventh *procès-verbal* of July 23, that the Inspector General of all the sectors where there are "compact masses of Armenians," i.e., all the sectors except the sixth, should be foreigners. It seems to me unlikely that the Porte will agree to the appointment of five *foreign* Inspectors General.

Should the Triple Alliance, unable or unwilling to rid themselves of the idea that the draft Russian proposal of one Governor General for the six vilayets would lead to the creation of a special Russian sphere, and, reluctant to admit that a radical decentralisation scheme of the kind is in the best interests of the Ottoman Government, insist on the rejection of the first and second Articles of the Russian draft scheme and on embodying in the Turkish scheme the ten points set forth at the end of the seventh *procès-verbal* of July 23rd, two courses would seem to be open: viz. to allow the Russian draft scheme to drop altogether; or to press the Porte to accept the above amendments suggested by the Triple Alliance, with perhaps additions, e.g. regional service. Again, it would be possible, as a compromise, to split up the six provinces (with the addition of Trebizond) into two sectors, as provided for in the Turkish scheme, but have two Governors General appointed with the consent of the Powers and with the powers and machinery suggested in the Russian draft proposals, i.e. have two Provinces instead of one.

As regards the likelihood of massacres and the consequent necessity of immediately appointing some foreign gendarmerie officers &c. with the idea of preventing their occurrence, the best deterrent is the fear of Russian intervention. The presence of a few foreigners will not prevent massacres, should the central authority decide to allow them to take place.

G. H. FITZMAURICE.

P.S. *August 16th, 1913.*—Since writing the foregoing, a prominent Armenian informs me that some of his people have been in communication with "representative" Germans here and have put it plainly to the latter that German opposition to the principle underlying the Russian draft proposals and contained in Art[icle]s I and II was deeply resented by the Armenians. The Germans, it would appear, were informed that their past cynical attitude in the question had been such as to earn the hatred of the Armenians; that recent German coquetry with the Armenians could not be considered a genuine conversion as long as the Germans were busy emasculating the Russian proposals; that Germany, pending the full development of her policy in Cilicia and Asia Minor, was bent on the economic conquest of Cilicia, but that, as long as she thwarted real reforms in Armenia proper (i.e. the six vilayets) she would have to reckon, not on the support, but on the determined hostility of the 500,000 Armenians in the Adana and Aleppo regions.

As the result of these conversations, the "representative" Germans are said to have withdrawn their opposition in the matter of regional military service and the installation of Roumelian emigrants in Armenian centres (Art[icle]s XII and XIX of the Russian proposals) and to have suggested as a compromise on the Russian scheme of a single province with a Governor General appointed by the Sultan with the consent of the Powers, that the Turkish scheme of dividing the seven vilayets into two zones should remain intact but that the two foreign Inspectors General should be appointed with the consent of the Powers and should be given power to nominate as well as dismiss all functionaries, including the Valis. I believe negotiations on these lines are proceeding between the Germans, the Armenians, and Talaat Bey, the Minister of the Interior. Should the latter agree, this compromise would perhaps go a long way to supply the indispensable foreign *executive* control aimed at in the Russian draft proposals. Owing to international jealousy between the Great Powers, Inspectors General of Swiss nationality would perhaps be the most suitable.

It may be added that, should the Committee of Union and Progress Government have their way in the matter of the reoccupation of Adrianople and district despite the decision of Europe and the preliminary and final treaties signed by the Ottoman delegates, there will be a return to the chauvinism of recent years and a consequent reluctance to accept outside suggestions as regards reforms in Armenia. Again, political life in Turkey will be centred and focussed on Adrianople, as in the case of Crete, to the detriment of the cause of reform and development of Anatolia.

G. H. F.

MINUTES.

Our attitude till now has been that the Powers must be unanimous as to the reforms to be introduced and that these must be accepted by the Porte without coercion. We also stipulated that the scheme introduced should not go beyond that of 1895.

Mr. Marling and Mr. Fitzmaurice find these three stipulations somewhat embarrassing and I think we need feel no scruples in abandoning the third since the Turks themselves have suggested a more far-reaching scheme.

As for the second, I presume we should not object to coercing the Turks if the other Powers were willing and if all would agree on the form of coercion to be employed. But this is almost certainly impossible as the Triple Alliance would never allow the Triple Entente to exercise any effective pressure though Germany herself might advise the Turks to adopt a certain number of amendments to their scheme.

Our first stipulation seems a truism and I do not see how we can abandon it except by doing what Mr. Marling advises, i.e., washing our hands of the whole business. This would be a very drastic step and would probably have at least four disadvantages. It would (1) embitter our relations with the Triple Alliance especially Germany, (2) annoy Russia, (3) play into the hands of the Young Turks and (4) lead the Armenians to think that we were abandoning them to their fate. I do not think it a practicable plan.

On the other hand, if we accept the Turkish scheme even with the proposed amendments, as a *pis-aller*, I feel sure that the Russians would never follow suit as they feel very strongly on this question.

It is therefore very difficult to know what to do but I think it might help us a little if we could find out what M. Sazonov thinks of the question now in the light of the

discussion recorded in these *procès-verbaux*. We cannot know this till he returns from his holiday.

I do not therefore see what can be done for the present.

H. N.

Sept[ember] 7, 1913

Mr. Fitzmaurice's report is an admirable paper and brings out in strong relief the principal points on which the whole controversy hangs.

Mr. Marling rather suggests that we are face to face with a dilemma, having practically to choose between (a) doing something genuine in favour of the Armenians and (b) following the policy—if it be a policy—of abstaining from doing whatever does not recommend itself to Germany.

If these were the only alternatives, I confess I should see many advantages in evading this hopeless issue as Mr. Marling suggests, by withdrawing ourselves altogether from the scene. But it seems to me that Mr. Fitzmaurice strongly hints at another solution, especially in his P.S.

According to his diagnosis, which I see no reason to dispute, the principal motive for German opposition to real reform, as represented by the "Russian" scheme (in the preparation of which we had a large share) is the fear that a reformed Armenia means a Russian Armenia. From this view flow all the fatal objections which, in Mr. Fitzmaurice's graphic words, have decapitated the scheme of reforms by cutting out the one really effective safeguard of efficient and impartial administration: the creation of a strong, capable, and independent provincial authority with absolute power over appointments. It is difficult not to agree with Mr. Fitzmaurice when he characterizes all reforms which do not include this vital element, as a sham and a pretence. It will be remembered how Germany and Austria similarly frustrated every possible reform in Macedonia because they believed any real delegation of administrative powers into competent hands would play into the hands of Russia, as the protector of the Slav States. That policy has led first to the Turkish revolution and then to the recent wars. In the end it is clearly seen that it is not Russian influence or prestige which has grown to formidable proportions.

If it were possible to convince Germany that her diagnosis is false, that Armenia does not at all desire to become Russified, and would much prefer just government under Turkish rule; that the one danger of a Russification of Armenia lies in her despair of obtaining decent government otherwise than by provoking such disturbances and atrocities as will bring about a Russian liberation, then Germany might recognize the merits of the "Russian" reform scheme in its essential features, and agree to secure the necessary agreement between the six musicians of the Concert which alone would be able to wring from the Turk his consent to a genuine reform.

I do not see why we should from the very first despair of making Germany see reason, and I would submit that the British government should make an earnest effort to convert the German government to a true view of the situation. I am not sanguine that this could be done by merely allowing the discussion to continue in the rather unwholesome atmosphere of Constantinople. It would be well to work if possible upon Herr von Jagow, either through the German embassy here, or through Sir E. Goschen. Verbal communication could be aided by a memorandum for which good and effective material could be found in Mr. Fitzmaurice's present memorandum.

Sir L. Mallet to see (27)

E. A. C.

Sept[ember] 23.

Meanwhile I would suggest that, without waiting further, Mr. Fitzmaurice should be warmly thanked for his thoughtful and effective presentation of a very complicated problem.⁽²⁸⁾

E. A. C.

Mr. Fitzmaurice should certainly be thanked. Since the above minutes were written we have been informed that discussions are proceeding between the Russian and German Amb[assadors] at Con[stantino]ple with the hope of reaching an understanding on these reform questions.⁽²⁹⁾ We can await the results of these discussions. The real difficulty will lie not in reconciling divergent views of the Powers but in getting the Turkish Gov[ernment] to accept and cordially co-operate in a reform scheme and especially now that they are elated with success.

A. N.

E. G.

⁽²⁷⁾ [Unsigned marginal note: "Returned by Sir L. Mallet. 13 Oct[ober]."]

⁽²⁸⁾ [Thanks were sent to Mr. Fitzmaurice in Sir Edward Grey's despatch (No. 230) to Mr. Marling of October 2, 1913. (F.O. 40170/19208/13/44)]

⁽²⁹⁾ [v. immediately succeeding document.]

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.

Constantinople, September 26, 1913.

F.O. 43989/19208/13/44.

D. 2.15 P.M.

Tel. (No. 486.)

R. 6 P.M.

Armenian reforms.

The Russian and German Ambassadors have been discussing basis of compromise concerning the essential points of the scheme, and the former informs me that they have agreed on formula, of which the following is translation⁽¹⁾ :—

1. The Porte has decided to apply to the Powers to recommend two Inspectors-General for the two secteurs of Eastern Anatolia, (a) Erzeroum, Trebizond, and Sivas, and (b) Van, Bitlis, Kharput, and Diarbekir, with whom a five years' contract could be concluded. The Porte at the same time evinces the intention to have recourse to the assistance of the Powers whenever these contracts expire.

2. The Porte recognises the right of these two inspectors to select the higher officials and the judge for nomination by the Imperial Government, and to appoint the other officials, as well as to dismiss all officials whatever in their secteur.

3. There will be an elective council in each secteur composed of Moslems and Christians in equal numbers.

4. The same principle of equality will be applied in the distribution of all offices in the two secteurs.

5. The Porte invites the Great Powers to supervise themselves the application of reforms through their Ambassadors at Constantinople and their local agents (*i.e.*, presumably the consuls).

6. The Porte proposes to come to an understanding with the Powers on other reforms to be applied in the two secteurs of Eastern Anatolia.

The Russian Ambassador has sent the foregoing formula to his Government for discussion with the French and British Governments.

(Very Confidential.)

From conversations with the German Ambassador I gather that his Excellency has not committed himself, especially as regards the second point, quite so far as the Russian Ambassador represents, but his attitude is no longer so uncompromising as it was six weeks ago, and he asserts that the Turkish Government recognise that to satisfy Armenians the guarantee of the Powers must be admitted in some form.

The Russian Ambassador informs me that he has read over the first five points to the Grand Vizier, who remarked that he personally thought they might be accepted.

The Grand Vizier's influence in the present Cabinet is not strong, and it seems unlikely that so far-reaching a scheme will be accepted except under very firm and unanimous pressure from the Powers. The Russian Ambassador seems prepared to find that if such pressure has to be used the German Ambassador, and certainly the Italian Ambassador, will demur.

. MINUTES.

This is certainly a step in advance but it is to be feared that the forecast in the last paragraph may prove correct.

We have so far left to Russia the initiative in the question of Armenian reforms and it might be better to reserve our observations on this new development till we have received those of the Russian Gov[ernmen]t.

H. N.

Sept[ember] 27, 1913.

Please see 44555.⁽²⁾

R. P. M.

Sept[ember] 27/1913.

⁽¹⁾ [*cp. G.P.*, XXXVIII, pp. 146-7.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. infra*, pp. 520-1, No. 571, where M. de Etter's communication of September 25 is reproduced in full.]

We have had this from M. de Etter. As the German gov[ernmen]t have gone so far, we may perhaps hope that they will continue in the path which seems to offer the only possible hope of effective reforms being really introduced.

The most encouraging feature is that the Grand Vizier has expressed so favourable an opinion.

E. A. C.
Sept[ember] 27.

The Russian Gov[ernmen]t have approved the scheme. We sh[oul]d let them know that we also approve it and will support it. I have but faint hopes of the Turks accepting it.

A. N.
E. G.

No. 569.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 45803/19208/13/44.

Constantinople, D. October 7, 1913, 2.30 P.M.

Tel. (No. 497.)

R. October 8, 1913, 11.15 A.M.

Armenian reforms.

The Minister of the Interior made the following communication to Sir R. Crawford and Mr. Graves yesterday afternoon.

The Ottoman Government offer these gentlemen appointment on five years contract as inspectors-general of the two secteurs of north-eastern Anatolia with powers similar to those of Hilmi in Macedonia (see articles additionnels enclosed in the Porte's note verbale of July 1st sent in my despatch No. 580 of July 3).⁽²⁾

Sir R. Crawford demurred to his appointment on the grounds of his slight acquaintance with the language and administrative questions of the provinces concerned and of his desire to complete his work of finance and customs reorganization.

Mr. Graves said that "he foresaw serious objections to his acceptance. Besides the inherent difficulties of the task no one could ignore certain international jealousies and suspicions that would be aroused. The Minister of the Interior should remember that he was a British official temporarily seconded for employment in a non-political financial post and it would be impossible for him to undertake the duties in question without the approval and encouragement of H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] and assurance that his future prospects and claim to pension were not endangered."

The Minister requested Mr. Graves to ask authorisation of H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] to accept, adding that, as Sir R. Crawford declined it would be possible that one secteur would suffice, Sivas being excluded as less in need of special treatment.

Mr. Graves was also informed that in the event of his acceptance the Porte desired H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] to nominate another British official to succeed him on financial Commission.

(Very Confidential.)

Graves informs me that he gathered from the Minister of the Interior that these appointments had been suggested by the German Ambassador. The German Ambassador has not consulted me before suggesting these appointments to the Porte.

It is to be noted that the powers to be given to Graves are less than those set forth in my telegram No. 486.⁽³⁾

It might be well that I should inform the Russian Ambassador of the foregoing.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent, on October 14, to Berlin (as No. 362); to St. Petersburg (as No. 701).]

⁽²⁾ [Unsigned marginal note: "See (30940)." v. *supra*, pp. 474-9, No. 538, and *encls.*]

⁽³⁾ [Unsigned marginal note: "Of Sept[ember] 26." v. immediately preceding document.]

MINUTES

1) It is difficult not to see in this move a device inspired by the German ambassador to produce friction between England and Russia and at the same time to water down the most important features of the reform scheme which the German gov[ernmen]t have agreed to support.

(a) The Porte was, under the scheme to apply "to the Powers" to recommend the two Inspectors General. That is a very different thing from the Porte's offering the posts direct to two British officials temporarily lent to Turkey.

(b) Mr Marling observes that the powers proposed to be conferred on Mr. Graves are more circumscribed than those contemplated in the recent scheme, and summarised in his tel[egram] No. 486 (43989) (1) I have some difficulty of forming an opinion on this point from the scanty information available, but I presume that Mr Marling means that the 2nd clause of the new scheme recognizing the right of the Inspectors General to select all the higher officials, is wider than the 4th Additional Article of the Law for the Administration of the Vilayets (see encl[osure] 3 in 30940), (5) which confers a similar right only in regard to such officials as will, by decision of the Turkish cabinet, be attached to the Inspectors General; although the powers conferred by articles 9 and 10 of the Instructions to the Inspectors General (encl[osure] 4 in 30940) in the matter of the supervision, recall, and transfer of *all* the officials seem pretty extensive.

(c) Apart from this apparent weakening of the Inspector General's position, there is the further innovation that only one is to be appointed, not in the sense originally so strongly urged by Russia (and approved by us), that all the affected provinces should be under one authority, but with the intention to leave one of the two "secteurs" out of the scheme.

(d) Further, it appears from Mr. Marling's telegram No 498 (45720) (6) that in suggesting the transfer of the two British officials from the Customs and the Finance Commission respectively to the Armenian posts, the Germans hope to have their own countrymen appointed to the posts so vacated. The result would be the transfer of the British officials to a sphere where they would probably get into difficulties and therefore become powerless to achieve much beyond creating friction with Russia, and their replacement by Germans in the posts where foreign influence is most important and has the maximum of effectiveness.

2) We must clearly be most circumspect in dealing with this situation. It would not, I think, be sufficient to inform the Russian ambassador at Constantinople of the Turkish proposals. It would be well to bring them to the notice of the Russian gov[ernmen]t by direct communication at St. Petersburg, with an expression of the view taken of them by H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment]. At the same time Mr. Marling might be directed to inform the Porte that Mr. Graves has at their request referred the question of their offer of appointment to H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] who consider that as the whole problem of Armenian reforms is being discussed by the 6 Great Powers, no important arrangement could be agreed to by H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] except in consultation with the other governments, and that pending a definite understanding between the Powers and Turkey respecting the scheme of reforms, British officials would not be allowed to undertake duties of the nature of those which Sir R. Crawford and Mr Graves have been asked to undertake.

3) It would also be desirable to communicate to Herr von Jagow whatever instructions we do send to Mr. Marling in this connection.

E. A. C.

Oct[ober] 8.

It is quite evident that having promised our support to the scheme of reforms agreed upon by the Russian and German Gov[ernmen]ts we cannot go behind it and allow British officials to accept direct from the Porte the two most important posts indicated in that scheme—Sir L. Dane came to me the other day and said he had been sounded by the Grand Vizier as to accepting the post of Inspector Gen[era]l. I told him how the matter stood.

We should telegraph to Mr. Marling in the sense indicated by Sir Eyre Crowe—and we should let Berlin and St. Petersburg know of the offer made and of our reply.

A. N.

We are now a party or have promised to become a party to a scheme of reforms agreed upon by Russia and Germany and presumably to be accepted by other Powers and cannot act apart from them. Answer to this effect as proposed in the minutes. (7)

E. G.

(4) [v. immediately preceding document.]

(5) [v. *supra*, p. 476, No. 538, encl. 3.]

(6) [Not reproduced. Mr. Marling reported in his telegram (No. 498) of October 7, 1913, D. 9.20 P.M., R. 10.45 P.M., that a German and an Austro-Hungarian delegate were "to be added to Commission of Financial Reforms," and "that there is also question of appointing German in Customs Administration." (F O. 45720/19208/13/44.)]

(7) [v. immediately succeeding document.]

No. 570.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 45803/19208/13/44.

Tel. (No. 477.)

Foreign Office, October 14, 1913, 4.45 P.M.

(Armenia.)

Your tel[egram] No. 497 (of October 7).⁽²⁾

H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] cannot agree to arrangements of this kind being settled between them and the Porte independently at a moment when whole problem of Armenian reforms is under discussion between all the Powers.

Pending definite general understanding respecting reform scheme British officials cannot therefore be authorized to accept appointments such as those offered to Sir R. Crawford and Mr. Graves.

You should inform Porte accordingly and may speak in above sense to your Russian colleague and to your German colleague also if you think it desirable.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Berlin (No. 363); to St Petersburg (No. 702), "for information."]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

No. 571.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. O'Beirne.

F.O. 44555/19208/13/44.

(No. 361.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 27, 1913.

The Russian Chargé d'Affaires called on the 25th ultimo and made a communication as follows:—

“Les Ambassadeurs de Russie et d'Allemagne à Constantinople sont tombés d'accord de s'appliquer à faire accepter par la Porte et par leurs collègues le projet de réformes en Arménie résumé dans les six points suivants.⁽¹⁾

1) La Sublime Porte a décidé de s'adresser aux Puissances pour leur demander de lui recommander deux Inspecteurs Généraux pour les deux secteurs de l'Anatolie Orientale, a) Erzeroum, Trébizonde, Sivas, et b) Van, Bitlis, Kharpout, Diarbékir, avec lesquels elle pourrait conclure un contrat de ans; la Porte manifeste en même temps sa résolution de s'adresser au concours des Puissances toutes les fois où ces contrats auraient pris fin.

2) La Porte reconnaît à ces deux Inspecteurs le droit de présenter à la nomination du Gouvernement Turc les fonctionnaires supérieurs et les juges, de nommer les autres fonctionnaires, ainsi que de destituer librement, sans exception aucune, tous les fonctionnaires dans leurs secteurs.

3) Il y aura dans chacun de ces secteurs une assemblée élective composée par moitié de musulmans et de chrétiens.

4) Ce même principe d'égalité sera appliqué pour la répartition de tous les fonctionnaires dans les deux secteurs.

⁽¹⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp. 517–8, No. 568, and *mins.*]

5) La Porte invite les Grandes Puissances de contrôler elles-mêmes l'application des réformes par l'entremise des Ambassadeurs à Constantinople et de leurs Consuls sur les lieux.

6) La Porte se propose de s'entendre avec les Puissances sur les autres réformes à appliquer dans les deux secteurs de l'Anatolie Orientale.

Monsieur de Etter stated that the Russian Gov[ernmen]t had approved the arrangement, and they trusted that H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] would do likewise and would support it.

On the 3rd October I informed M. de Etter that H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] were prepared to do this.⁽²⁾

[I am, &c.

E. GREY.]

⁽²⁾ [This note is not reproduced, as the contents are given above. (F.O. 44555/19208/13/44.)]

No. 572.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 49815/19208/13/44.

(No. 320.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, October 27, 1913.

The Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs returned from abroad on the 25th instant and received me yesterday. He said that the main object of his stay at Berlin⁽²⁾ had been to speak to the German Government on the subject of the projected reforms in Armenia. He had explained to Herr von Bethman Hollweg that Russia was deeply interested in this question on account of the large Armenian population within her borders. The scheme of reforms which had been agreed upon must be really carried into effect, and there must not be a repetition of what had occurred on previous occasions in Turkey, when from the moment a scheme of reforms had been agreed upon the process of setting it at nought had begun. The German Ambassador in Constantinople had shown himself ready to come to an agreement with Monsieur de Giers in regard to the present scheme. It was now for Germany to assist in inducing, or if necessary obliging, Turkey to acquiesce in the reforms being brought into effective operation, and to use her influence with her Allies to the same purpose.⁽³⁾

The German Chancellor had expressed his willingness to act in the direction of Russia's wishes, and appeared fairly confident that Germany could succeed in inducing Turkey to acquiesce in the effective introduction of the projected reforms, but he had stipulated that Russia must leave to Germany "the choice of the methods" which she thought best calculated to achieve the end in view. To this stipulation Monsieur Sazonow had assented, but he had insisted that the reforms must not be long delayed, and that they must be in operation at latest by the coming spring, since there would otherwise certainly be an outbreak or disturbance in Armenia with the melting of the snows.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

⁽²⁾ [For M. Sazonov's visit to Berlin, *cp. supra*, pp. 46-7, No. 54, and *note* ⁽²⁾.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. infra*, pp. 523-4, No. 576, and *min.*; pp. 524-5, Nos. 577-9.]

M[onsieu]r Sazonow also had some conversation with the German Chancellor regarding the general attitude of Austria-Hungary and its effect on Russo-German relations. I report what His Excellency told me on this point in my immediately succeeding despatch.(')

I have, &c.

HUGH O'BEIRNE.

(¹) [Mr. O'Beirne, in his despatch (No. 321), D. October 27, R. November 3, 1913, stated that M. Sazonov had told him "that he had spoken very strongly to Herr von Bethmann Hollweg regarding the general attitude of Austria-Hungary and its effects on Russo-German relations. He said that no two Powers could be more peacefully inclined than Russia and Germany. They had an enormous continuous frontier and they mutually realised the immense importance of living on the friendliest terms with one another. But as things now stood they were both of them at the mercy of some rash and ill-considered action on the part of the Austrian Government, which might suddenly at any moment involve them in a general conflict. This was an intolerable state of things. He could not admit that Austria-Hungary, after all a second-class military Power, should have it in her hands to control the relations between two Powers like Germany and Russia and should be allowed to become the arbiter of European peace or war." (F O 49816/49816/13/38)]

No. 573.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.

Constantinople, October 31, 1913.

F.O. 49535/19208/13/44.

D. 1.35 P.M.

Tel. (No. 532.) Confidential.

R. 10.50 P.M.

Crawford tells me that Talaat is determined that reforms shall be real. He is equally determined to resist their imposition by the Powers, but Crawford is convinced that he would listen to and probably adopt suggestions made by the Powers unofficially and privately. I gathered that it is largely a question of form.

Turkish Government propose to ask him to be president of informal commission to advise them about their own reforms scheme.

He feels that he could not refuse, as there are many economic and financial questions involved.

Proposal seems to be an excellent one, as the Turkish Government have complete confidence in Crawford and are disposed to accept his recommendations offhand.

MINUTES.

It is not quite clear from this telegram what exactly the Turkish proposal is. According to Mr. Marling's No. 486 of September 26 (43989)(¹) the points agreed upon between Russia and Germany (which we entirely approve) were to be put forward by Turkey as a Turkish proposal. The Grand Vizier expressed the personal opinion that the scheme thus outlined might be accepted. We are waiting for a definite pronouncement on the part of the Turkish government.

If the informal committee now contemplated by the Turkish government is to take the Russo-German outline-scheme into consideration with the view of recommending its formal adoption, perhaps with unimportant modifications, and its being then definitely put forward as "their own reform scheme," then the appointment of Sir R. Crawford as chairman of such committee would offer great advantages.

If on the other hand, the idea is to abandon the Russo-German scheme, and to fall back on some totally different and probably ineffective scheme, then it might prove rather awkward that a scheme which neither Russia nor England are likely to approve should be brought forward under the auspices of Sir R. Crawford.

Qu[ery]. Telegram to Sir L. Mallet in the terms of the annexed draft.(²)

E. A. C.

November 1.

I quite agree with above minute.

A. N.

(¹) [v. *supra*, p. 517, No 568.]

(²) [v. immediately succeeding document.]

No. 574.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir L. Mallet.

F.O. 49535/19208/13/44.

Tel. (No. 509.)

Foreign Office, November 3, 1913, 2.25 p.m.

(Armenian Reforms.)

Your telegram No. 532 (49535; of October 31).⁽¹⁾

If proposed informal committee offers a reasonable chance of getting Turkish government to adopt and put forward as their own a scheme of reforms generally on the lines of the six points in Mr. Marling's telegram No. 486 (49989; of September 26),⁽²⁾ with which H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] are in cordial agreement, I should welcome Crawford's appointment as chairman.

If, however, object of Turkish Government is to fall back upon a totally different scheme of their own, probably of doubtful efficiency, to which neither Russia nor England would be likely to agree, his appointment might eventually prove a grave embarrassment.

⁽¹⁾ [v. immediately preceding document]⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 517, No. 568.]

No. 575.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 50248/19208/13/44.

Tel. (No. 379.)

Foreign Office, November 4, 1913, 5.45 p.m.

I am receiving constant proposals from the Turkish Government for the appointment of various British officials, already in their service in different departments, to new posts in Armenian provinces. I am reluctant to encourage any steps which might appear to involve isolated action on the part of H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] in connection with the reform of Turkish provincial administration, and have therefore deprecated any new appointments of foreign officials being definitely created otherwise than in consultation with all the Great Powers. It is however clearly desirable that the question of Armenian reforms should not be allowed to hang fire. Since Russia and Germany have taken the lead in recommending to Grand Vizier the outlines of a scheme to be put forward by Turkey, with which H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] are in entire accord, I trust the two Governments may take an early opportunity to urge the Porte itself to come forward with the proposals.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to St Petersburg (No 733); to Constantinople (No. 515); to Paris (No 392).]

No. 576.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾*St. Petersburg, November 5, 1913.*

F.O. 50387/19208/13/44.

D. 8.30 p.m.

Tel. (No. 379.)

R. 9.30 p.m.

Your telegram No. 379 of Nov[ember] 4 to Berlin.⁽²⁾

Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs expressed thanks of Russian Government for your attitude regarding proposed appointment of British officers.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Berlin; to Paris; to Constantinople.]⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document, and note ⁽¹⁾.]

He informed me that Grand Vizier recently intimated to Russian Ambassador that Ottoman Government had objections to scheme of Armenian reforms suggested by the Powers, and his Highness put forward other proposals which Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs told me would not afford any security of effective reform. Turkey proposed, amongst other things, to reserve to herself appointment of two inspectors-general, without stipulation as to the approval of the Powers. Russian Government had thereupon put themselves in communication with Berlin, with a view to finding formula which would preserve reality of reform while sparing susceptibilities of the Porte. They hoped to succeed, but it would take some little time.

As reported in my despatch No. 320,⁽³⁾ Minister for Foreign Affairs, when in Berlin, obtained assurances from German Government that they would assist in inducing Turkey to acquiesce in introduction of reforms.

MINUTE.

It would, I think, be a pity to leave Germany under the impression that she is dealing with Russia alone in this matter. . . .⁽⁴⁾

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 521-2, No. 572.]

⁽⁴⁾ [The rest of this minute comprised a draft of a telegram to Sir E. Goschen in which Sir A. Nicolson emphasized the point mentioned in the minute. The draft was replaced by telegram (No 524) to Sir L. Mallet, *v. infra*, p. 525, No. 579.]

No. 577.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 50424/30825/13/44.
Tel. (No. 549.)

Constantinople, D. November 5, 1913, 11.25 P.M.
R. November 6, 1913, 8 A.M.

Your telegram No. 515.⁽¹⁾

Colonel Hawker is appointed chief of committee of inspection of gendarmerie for Armenian vilayets, to reside at Trebizond, with extensive powers. He has asked whether His Majesty's Government object to his accepting. I asked whether the appointment was of a temporary character, and he said there was nothing to indicate this.

I propose to inform him in the sense of your telegram No. 488.⁽²⁾

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 523, No. 575, and note ⁽¹⁾]

⁽²⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 488) of October 21, D. 2.25 P.M., was written in answer to Mr. Marling's telegram (No. 507) of October 17, D. 7.20 P.M., R. 8.30 P.M., in which he stated that Colonel Hawker was "about to be appointed inspector of gendarmerie in Armenia." Sir Edward Grey replied that pending the discussion of a reform scheme with the Powers "it would seem better for Turkey not to make definite new appointments." (F.O. 47276/30825/13/44.) *cp. infra*, p. 525, No. 579.]

No. 578.

Sir E. Goschen to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Berlin, November 6, 1913.

F.O. 50488/19208/13/44.
Tel. (No. 192.)

D. 6 P.M.
R. 8.15 P.M.

Your telegram No. 379 of Nov[ember] 4⁽²⁾: Armenian reforms.

Acting Secretary of State says he is doing all in his power to urge Ottoman Government to come to a decision, but that latter are making difficulties. He has

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Paris (as No. 393); to Rome (as No. 329); to St. Petersburg (as No. 734); to Vienna (as No. 311).]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 523, No. 575.]

spoken strongly to Djavid Bey. Latter said that Ottoman Government objected to selection by Powers of candidates for inspector-generalship on the ground that it would be interference with Turkish sovereign rights. On the ground of this objection, Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs is inclined to favour suggestion of Grand Vizier that inspector-general should be selected by the Sublime Porte and advisers chosen from persons nominated by the Powers, so long as guarantees are given as to the proper position of advisers and as to their advice being followed. Djavid Bey seems to have expressed some fears as to Russian intentions, but Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs told him that M. Sazonof, when at Berlin, had given full assurances that Russia entirely shared Germany's views as to the maintenance of integrity of Turkish Asiatic Empire.⁽³⁾

(³) [For M. Sazonov's visit to Berlin, *cp supra*, pp. 46-7, No. 54, and note (²).]

No. 579.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir L. Mallet.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 50424/30825/13/44.

Tel. (No. 524.)

Foreign Office, November 8, 1913, 7.15 p.m.

Your tel[egram] No. 549.⁽²⁾

You should represent to the Porte that H[is] M[ajesty's] Gov[ernmen]t are most anxious that a satisfactory project of reform should be established as soon as possible in the Armenian Vilayets of Turkey, and they have been gratified to learn that the Russian and German Gov[ernmen]ts have laid certain suggestions to that end before the Ottoman Gov[ernmen]t, with which H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] are in hearty concurrence and which they have every hope will also prove acceptable to the other Powers. H[is] M[ajesty's] Gov[ernmen]t trust that the Ottoman Gov[ernmen]t will give these suggestions their most earnest consideration as if a scheme of this kind were initiated by the Porte it would greatly strengthen and consolidate the position of the Ottoman Gov[ernmen]t and also promote the integrity of the Asiatic provinces of the Turkish Empire.

Such being the situation H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment], while genuinely desirous of affording all the assistance which lies in their power, foresee great difficulties were the Ottoman Gov[ernmen]t at this juncture to embark on an independent scheme of their own dependent upon foreign aid for its execution without consultation with the Powers. If the execution of such a scheme in the vilayets of Asiatic Turkey were to be entrusted to officers exclusively chosen from one nationality such as the British, friction with Germany and Russia and possibly other Powers must inevitably arise and cause great embarrassment to the Turkish Gov[ernmen]t. For it is only with the goodwill and co-operation of the Powers that foreign aid can be effectively used.

H[is] M[ajesty's] Gov[ernmen]t therefore earnestly hope that the Porte will lose no time in bringing discussions to a satisfactory termination in the first instance with Russia and Germany and ultimately with the other Powers, and will meanwhile postpone important administrative changes when they involve definite and new appointments of a permanent character of British or other foreign officials.

You should inform Col[onel] Hawker of the above.

(¹) [This telegram was repeated to Paris (No. 399); to Berlin (No. 385); to Rome (No. 334); to St. Petersburg (No. 740); to Vienna (No. 316).]

(²) [*v. supra*, p. 524, No. 577.]

No. 580.

Sir E. Goschen to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 51125/19208/13/44.

Tel. (No. 194.)

Berlin, November 10, 1913.

My telegram No. 192 of 6th November :⁽²⁾ Armenian reforms.

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs used different language to me to-day about Grand Vizier's proposed scheme of reforms. I asked him whether he was still inclined to favour it. He replied in the negative and said that German Ambassador had been instructed to continue to press Sublime Porte to accept scheme put forward by the two Powers. He added that progress was being made, and he thought that Grand Vizier was coming round to latter scheme.

⁽¹⁾ [The text given above is taken from the copy in the *Confidential Print*, as the original decypher cannot be traced.]

⁽²⁾ [*v supra*, pp. 524-5, No 578]

No. 581.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 52942/19208/13/44.

(No. 933.)

Constantinople, D. November 12, 1913.

Sir :—

R. November 22, 1913.

Almost immediately on my arrival in Constantinople I spoke to the Russian Ambassador on the subject of reforms in the Armenian vilayets and enquired whether His Excellency and the German Ambassador had opened with the Ottoman Government the discussion of the six points agreed upon between them and communicated to His Majesty's Government on the 26th of September last.⁽¹⁾ His Excellency told me that he had been in confidential communication with the Grand Vizier for some time and had received the general support of Baron Wangenheim who was I understood not taking part in the discussion of details.

Monsieur de Giers found the Grand Vizier entirely in favour of reforms but in an unyielding frame of mind in regard to the intervention of the Powers, and he had not up to the moment of our conversation been able to make any progress. The only satisfactory feature was that conversations supplemented by written communication had begun and were proceeding. He had just received a note from the Grand Vizier, but it was of a very vague description and in fact amounted to a "fin de non-recevoir." The Grand Vizier expressed the best intentions and announced the determination of the Porte to introduce reforms and their wish to employ some foreign officials to assist in carrying them out.

Monsieur de Giers said that he intended to see the Grand Vizier again immediately and press for more detailed assurances.

His Excellency said that the Porte would most strenuously resist the employment of European Inspectors General nominated by the Powers and would probably propose foreign advisers to the Inspectors General who would themselves be Ottoman subjects. Monsieur de Giers expressed to me his private opinion that, if it were really found impossible to induce the Porte to appoint foreign Inspectors General, the Powers might, on certain conditions, accept a compromise on the above lines.

He took his stand, however, for the present, on the six points and he did not intend to give the Porte any hint at this stage that the Powers might modify their

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 517, No. 568.]

demands. Baron Wangenheim with whom I had discussed the question of reforms on the occasion of my first official visit, expressed to me his private opinion that the Powers might be contented with advisers.

Not knowing what your views might be on this point, and not having had at that time any opportunity of ascertaining for myself the views of the Grand Vizier, I did not express any opinion but confined myself to assuring him of your deep interest in the question and of your strong conviction that the establishment of order and good government in the 6 vilayets was equally desirable in Turkish and Armenian interests.

As Monsieur de Giers had promised to keep me au courant of what passed, I asked him on the 7th instant what progress had been made. His Excellency said that he had pursued his discussion and had that day received a further communication from the Grand Vizier which went a little further than the first but was still too lacking in precision to prove in any degree acceptable. A copy of the Grand Vizier's communication which Monsieur de Giers communicated to me today is enclosed. I do not propose to criticise it in detail and will confine myself to pointing out that there is no mention of European Inspection [*sic*] General and that the Porte confine themselves to mentioning the employment of foreign advisers, as to the method of whose selection nothing is said. It may however be presumed that the Powers will be asked to recommend them. The powers conferred upon these advisers are of a shadowy character, and there is no provision for the enforcement of their dues [views]⁽²⁾ in case of a difference of opinion with the Inspector General. There is, moreover, no mention of control by the Ambassadors at Constantinople, or of the nature of the reforms which will be within the competence of the Inspector General. These and other points will be dealt with by my Russian colleague in his further communication with the Porte and I will not fail to keep you informed of the result.

I have, &c.

LOUIS MALLET.

Enclosure in No. 581.

Des conseillers étrangers qui seront adjoints aux inspecteurs généraux.

Article 1. A chaque inspecteur général il sera adjoint pour un délai de dix ans un conseiller étranger ayant des connaissances spéciales.

Article 2. Le conseiller a pour attributions de seconder l'inspecteur général par des inspections et réformes générales de la compétence de l'inspecteur général. Il est l'autorité immédiate des inspecteurs en chef des sections administratives de la circonscription inspectoriale et préside la commission d'inspection et de réformes composée par ces inspecteurs.

Article 3. Le conseiller examine les rapports d'inspection dressés par les inspecteurs et les transmet à l'inspecteur général soit directement soit après en avoir fait discuter par la commission d'inspection les parties qu'il jugera nécessaires de référer. Le conseiller ajoutera son avis personnel sur les questions faisant l'objet de ces rapports.

Article 4. L'inspecteur général mettra en application les décisions de la dite commission ou les rapports d'inspection qui lui sont directement transmis par le conseiller, en tant que leur objet serait de sa compétence. Il s'en référera aux Départements intéressés pour les questions nécessitant des instructions.

Article 5. En cas de divergence de vue entre l'inspecteur général et le conseiller, sur les questions se rapportant aux inspections et aux rapports, la question en litige sera soumise au Grand Vézirat accompagnée d'un exposé de motifs. C'est le Conseil de Ministres qui examine et décide la solution à y apporter.

(2) [Unsigned marginal comment: "careless reading over."]

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 52943/19208/13/44.

(No. 984.)

Sir,

Pera, D. November 13, 1913.

R. November 22, 1913.

I have the honour to state that on receiving on the 9th instant the instructions contained in your telegram no. 524 of Nov[ember] 8,⁽¹⁾ I applied for an interview with the Grand Vizier, but owing to the Bairam holidays I was unable to see him before the 11th instant. On that afternoon I went to Yeni Keui where the Grand Vizier's summer residence is situated, and read to His Highness a paraphrase of your telegram, informing him at the same time that you took the deepest interest in the question of reforms and regarded their adoption as of vital interest to the Ottoman Empire. His Highness listened attentively to the words of your message and to my observations and assured me at once that he was as convinced as yourself of the necessity of reforms and determined to carry them through. The Porte would however never accept European inspectors general with the extensive powers which it was proposed to confer upon them. The proposals communicated by the Russian Embassy would create a sort of "imperium in imperio" in the Turkish Empire and if adopted would seriously infringe the Sultan's sovereign rights. The Porte were entirely convinced of the disinterestedness of His Majesty's Government but there were other Powers of whom they could not but entertain suspicion.

I said that if His Highness referred to Russia, I was convinced that Turkish distrust was entirely unfounded and that the best proof of this lay in the proposals which had been put forward by the Russian Ambassador for European control, which would be the best guarantee that could be devised against the exclusive intervention of any one Power.

His Highness replied that he did not see the matter in that light, and if the Turkish Government accepted the proposals, in their present form, they would not only be parting with their sovereign rights but, if intervention ever took place, would not receive any quid pro quo in the nature of assistance from the other Powers.

He went on to tell me that he had been engaged in confidential discussion with the Russian Ambassador for some time past and that he thought that a satisfactory solution was in sight.

Instead of Inspectors-General he had proposed foreign advisers who would be in a far better position to carry through such reforms as were required than foreign Inspectors General. Take the case of Sir R. Crawford who had rendered such eminent services to the Ottoman Empire. Sir Richard had often told him that he could not have accomplished his task, had his position been a more prominent one, and this argument applied with double force to the case under present discussion. If this proposal were accepted, all that the Powers wanted would be attained and the susceptibilities of the Porte would be spared. I was at that time unaware of the actual terms of the Grand Vizier's reply to the Russian communication⁽²⁾ but in any case I should have refrained from discussing it in detail. I replied in general terms that unless there was European control in some form or other, neither the Powers nor the Armenians would be satisfied that the reforms would be lasting. The good Government of the six vilayets was a most pressing question and one which vitally concerned the maintaining intact of the Sultan's dominions,—a principle which the Prime Minister had just said in his Guildhall speech was of cardinal interest to Great Britain. His Highness had not seen the telegraphic report of the Prime Minister's speech⁽³⁾ as it had only arrived a few minutes before I left the Embassy, and he expressed great satisfaction on learning its tenour. I went on to say that His Highness might rest

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 525, No. 579.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. immediately preceding document.*]

⁽³⁾ [*v. The Times*, November 11, 1913, p. 10.]

assured that the Prime Minister had only expressed the general feeling but that everyone was united equally in thinking that the surest means of maintaining that principle would be by the adoption of some form of control by the Ambassadors over the execution of the Reforms. The Porte had so often in the past expressed the intention of introducing reforms but nothing had been done, and the failure of the new régime in this respect had filled people in England with distrust of the future. His Highness interrupted me and exclaimed that it was very unfair to blame the new régime as they had only been in power a very few years during which the country had been rent with internal dissensions and had had to wage a long war. The situation was now greatly improved, difficulties were being surmounted, and considerable progress had already been made. The Ottoman Government were determined to proceed on that path and hoped for the sympathy and support of Great Britain.

I did not pursue the subject further and I am strongly of opinion that it would be better for the present to leave the negotiations in the hands of the Russian Ambassador who is hopeful of a successful issue. The situation is difficult. The Government are in the frame of mind to render certain the rejection of any collective demand on the part of the Powers. They are at present determined to carry through the reforms with as little assistance from the Powers as possible.

Talaat Bey has expressed the intention of visiting the Vilayets himself, and I hear on all sides that the Government is convinced of the necessity of taking serious measures to remedy the present condition of affairs. Talaat Bey's visit to the Vilayets will doubtless be followed by good results, and it is probable that an effort will be made towards good Government, but it is a matter for grave doubt whether reforms would be lasting. It is, therefore, of the greatest importance not to take any steps now which might irritate the Porte and drive them into taking up a position from which it would be difficult to retreat.

I have, &c.

LOUIS MALLET.

No. 583.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 53083/19208/13/44.

(No. 939.)

Sir,

Constantinople, D. November 18, 1913.

R. November 24, 1913.

With reference to my despatch No. 933 of the 12th instant,⁽¹⁾ I have the honour to inform you that the Russian Ambassador told me this afternoon that his negotiations with the Grand Vizier on the subject of Armenian Reforms had made some further progress.

His Excellency had made an addition to articles 1 and 5 of the draft enclosed in my despatch No. 933,⁽¹⁾ which it will be seen from the amended version transmitted herewith are of considerable importance.

By clause 1 the Sublime Porte undertake to ask the Great Powers to recommend the advisers, to be attached to the Inspector General, whilst the reference to the Council of Ministers of questions relating to inspection and reports is eliminated from Article V and an addition inserted to the effect that the Inspector-General will take no administrative decision, without previous agreement with the advisers and that in case of divergency of view, that of the adviser shall prevail, if agreement be not reached within one month.

Monsieur de Giers told me that he had most carefully refrained from accepting these proposals and still maintains with the Grand Vizier his insistence on the 6 points. He is, however, of the opinion that it is important to conclude the negotiations as soon

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 526-7, No. 581.]

as possible, as the Ottoman Government will be even more difficult to deal with after they have obtained a loan than they are at present. He is, therefore, inclined to accept such modifications of the 6 points as do not materially affect their usefulness. I entirely share this view and am of opinion that even if the Powers were unanimous on insisting if necessary by force on the acceptance of a cut and dried scheme of reforms—it is a most improbable supposition—the Turkish Government would so impede their execution as to render them abortive. It would be better, I am convinced, in the present disposition of the Turkish Ministers, and of the Powers, to take as much as we can get without resorting to threats and to retain the good-will and co-operation of the Ottoman Authorities. Monsieur de Giers is to see the Grand Vizier to-morrow when he proposes to broach with His Highness the question of control.

I have, &c.

LOUIS MALLET.

Enclosure in No. 583.

Des conseillers étrangers qui seront adjoints aux inspecteurs généraux.

Article 1. A chaque inspecteur général il sera adjoint pour un délai de dix ans un conseiller étranger ayant des connaissances spéciales.

La Sublime Porte s'adressera aux Grandes Puissances pour leur demander de lui recommander ce Conseiller.

Article 5. En cas de divergences de vue entre l'inspecteur général et le conseiller, sur des questions se rapportant aux inspections et aux rapports, la question en litige sera soumise au Grand Vézirat qui lui donnera la suite qu'elle comporte. *L'inspecteur général ne prendra pas de disposition administrative sans accord préalable avec le Conseiller. En cas de divergence entre l'inspecteur général et le conseiller si dans un délai d'un mois le différend n'est pas tranché c'est l'avis du Conseiller qui prévaudra.*

No. 584.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 54149/19208/13/44.

(No. 958.)

Sir :—

Pera, D. November 25, 1913.

R. December 1, 1913.

In continuation of my despatch No. 953 of the 21st instant,⁽²⁾ I have the honour to enclose a copy of a revised project of reforms for the Eastern Vilayets which has been drawn up by the Russian Ambassador in consultation with the German Ambassador on the basis of the recent discussions which he has had with the Grand Vizier, as reported in my despatches Nos. 933⁽³⁾ and 939.⁽⁴⁾

In the opinion of both my colleagues, in which I concur, it represents the maximum demand which it is possible to make with any chance of success at the present time—and if the Porte accepts it with a good grace and puts its provisions into force it should provide a solid guarantee of better Government for the Vilayets. It will be seen that the condition that the Inspectors-General should be European has been dropped and the appointment of foreign advisers suggested in their place.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King.]

⁽²⁾ [Sir L. Mallet's despatch (No. 953), D. November 24, R. November 28, 1913, transmitted copies of articles which had appeared in the *Tanin* and *Jeune Turc* on the subject of reforms in Eastern Anatolia. (F.O. 53793/19208/13/44.)]

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 526–7, No. 581.]

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. immediately preceding document*]

This may at first sight appear to be an undesirable alteration but I am convinced that it is in reality an improvement on the original idea because it is important that the Administration should preserve as far as possible an Ottoman exterior, so long as the advisers are given sufficient power to make their advice and control effective which will be the case if the provisions of Article VIII are accepted.

No direct mention is made of the exercise of control by the Powers through the Ambassadors at Constantinople as both Monsieur de Giers and Baron de Wangenheim consider this unnecessary in view of the Treaty provisions of the Treaty of Berlin, and as the Ambassadors have, in any case, an inherent right of intervention which they will not fail to exercise in case of necessity.

Control is a point on which the Turkish opinion is extremely sensitive and had any more direct reference been made to it than is contained in Article VIII there would be but little chance of the Porte accepting the project.

As it is, my Russian colleague, on whom I called this morning in order to ascertain what had passed yesterday in his interview with the Grand Vizier who had been placed in possession of the draft project two days previously, did not give a very reassuring account of its prospects of acceptance.

He said that the Grand Vizier had evidently encountered great opposition in the Council of Ministers on the previous day when the matter was discussed and had probably been criticized for having gone so far as he had done in previous conversations. His Highness was in a very untractable state of mind, and as no progress was made after a conversation of an hour and a half Monsieur de Giers proposed the adjournment of the discussion to another day.

In the course of the interview His Excellency informed His Highness that the project represented the minimum of what the Powers could ask, and that if the Porte refused it and if massacres followed on their refusal he could not answer for what the Russian Government might do. The situation would at once become extremely grave and he would have to leave the matter in the hands of his Government.

I had some conversation with the Austrian Ambassador this evening on the same subject. He said that he thought that the Porte would end by accepting the project which it must be admitted was of a reasonable character and did not go too far; he said that perhaps it would be a little easier for the Porte if they were given 2 or 3 names from whom to choose their advisers but that the question of the nationality of this adviser would have to be considered: Monsieur de Giers, he told me confidentially, has said that the Russian Government would certainly not accept an Englishman, they would also, Monsieur de Pallavicini added, certainly not take a German; the Turkish Government would as certainly refuse a Russian, so that it would in his opinion be necessary to select them from the subjects of a minor Power.

I agree in thinking that this course is the best under the circumstances, although it is very unfortunate that Englishmen would not be acceptable, as they would undoubtedly be well suited for the sort of work and would not meddle in politics.⁽⁵⁾

I have, &c.

LOUIS MALLET.

Enclosure in No. 584.

Revised Project of Reforms for Eastern Vilayets.

Article I.

La Sublime Porte a décidé de s'adresser aux Puissances pour leur demander de lui recommander deux Conseillers qui seront adjoints aux deux Inspecteurs Généraux que le Gouvernement Impérial Ottoman a placé à la tête des deux secteurs de l'Anatolie Orientale;

- a) Erzéroum, Trébizonde, Sivas et b) Van, Bitlis, Kharpout, Diarbékir.

⁽⁵⁾ [*cp. infra*, pp 534-8, No. 586, and *min*]

La Sublime Porte déclare vouloir conclure avec ces Conseillers des contrats et manifeste en même temps de sa résolution d'avoir recours dans l'espace de dix ans à la recommandation des Puissances toutes les fois où ces contrats auraient pris fin.

Article II.

Toutes les mesures ordonnées d'un commun accord par l'Inspecteur Général et le Conseiller dans les questions administratives, financières et judiciaires sont définitives et devront être exécutées par les autorités civiles et militaires de qui dépend leur exécution.

Article III.

Les Inspecteurs Généraux exercent le droit de révoquer tous les fonctionnaires de leurs secteurs, droit qui leur a été accordé par les instructions annexées à la Note Circulaire de la Sublime Porte en date du 1^{er} Juillet 1913, (*) conjointement avec les Conseillers.

Ils auront également le droit de nommer conjointement tous les fonctionnaires et juges dont la nomination n'a pas besoin d'un Iradé Impérial. Quant aux fonctionnaires et juges dont la nomination exige la sanction souveraine, ils auront le droit de présenter leurs candidates à l'approbation de Sa Majesté le Sultan.

Article IV.

Les " Instructions relatives aux devoirs et attributions des Inspecteurs Généraux, " annexées à la Note Circulaire de la Sublime Porte du 1^{er} Juillet 1913 sub No. 34233/75 (*) seront revues et mises en concordance avec les intentions de la Sublime Porte exprimées dans la présente note.

Article V.

Le Conseiller est l'autorité immédiate de laquelle dépend le service d'inspection du secteur. Il préside la Commission d'Inspection formée par les inspecteurs en chef toutes les fois qu'il juge à propos de les convoquer.

Article VI.

Le Conseiller vérifiera soit en personne soit par les inspecteurs placés sous les ordres la situation des vilayets de son secteur, de même qu'il vérifiera tous les incidents et les questions administratives, financières ou judiciaires d'ordre général ou de caractère particulier ou privé qui pourraient surgir. Le Conseiller examinera les rapports dressés par les Inspecteurs et les transmettra à l'Inspecteur général soit directement, soit après avoir fait discuter par la Commission d'Inspection les parties qu'il jugerait nécessaire d'y référer. Le Conseiller ajoutera toujours son avis personnel sur les questions faisant l'objet de ces rapports.

Article VII.

L'Inspecteur Général mettra en exécution les rapports d'inspection et les décisions de la Commission approuvées par le Conseiller et soumis par lui.

Article VIII.

L'Inspecteur Général ne prendra aucune mesure d'ordre administratif, financier ou judiciaire sans accord préalable avec le Conseiller. En cas de divergence entre l'Inspecteur Général et le Conseiller la question en litige sera soumise au Grand Vézirat qui lui donnera la suite qu'elle comporte (après entente avec les Ambassades). Si le différend n'est pas tranché dans le délai d'un mois, c'est l'avis du Conseiller qui prévaudra.

(*) [v. *supra*, pp. 477-9, No. 533, *encl.* 4.]

Article IX.

En ce qui concerne les décisions prises par le Conseiller relativement aux questions 1) touchant à l'application des lois ou 2) n'ayant pas un caractère général ou 3) présentant un caractère d'urgence, elles seront exécutées sans délai et sans recours au Grand Vézirat.

Article X.

Les membres élus aux Assemblées Générales et aux Conseils Administratifs seront par moitié musulmans et non musulmans.

Ce même principe d'égalité sera appliqué pour la répartition de toutes les fonctions publiques dans les deux secteurs.

Article XI.

La compétence législative et budgétaire des Assemblées Générales sera étendue dans la mesure prévue par le projet de loi de 1880.⁽⁷⁾

Article XII.

Les recrues domiciliés dans chaque secteur y feront, en temps de paix, leur service militaire. Les régiments Hamidié seront licenciés.

Article XIII.

Les lois, décrets et avis officiels seront publiés dans chaque secteur dans les langues locales. Chaque particulier aura le droit devant les Tribunaux et devant l'Administration de faire usage de sa langue. Les jugements des Tribunaux seront libellés en turc et accompagnés, si possible, d'une traduction dans la langue des parties.

Article XIV.

Chaque nation a le droit de créer des taxes spéciales pour pourvoir aux besoins de ses écoles. La perception aura lieu sous forme de centimes additionnels.

Article XV.

Le Conseiller présidera la Commission, qui sera chargée de trancher les conflits agraires et de restituer aux Arméniens les terres dont ils ont été dépossédés.

Article XVI.

La justice sera réorganisée.

⁽⁷⁾ [v. A. & P., (1880), LXXXII, (C. 2704), pp. 3-38. cp. Hertslet: *Map of Europe by Treaty*, Vol. IV, pp. 2990-3, where an abstract is given.]

No. 585.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 54387/19208/13/44.

(No. 963.)

Sir :—

Constantinople, D. November 27, 1913.

R. December 2, 1913.

In continuation of my despatch No. 958 of the 25th instant⁽¹⁾ I have the honour to report that I enquired of my Russian colleague to-day what had been the result of his interview with the Grand Vizier on Tuesday afternoon on the subject of the reform project. Monsieur de Giers said that no advance had been made: the Grand Vizi[e]r had spoken of a counter project but had not yet produced it and His Excellency feared

⁽¹⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

that His Highness was experiencing great opposition in the council of Ministers to any scheme inspired by the Powers.

I asked whether in these circumstances the time had not come for me to speak again to the Grand Vizi[e]r and as Monsieur de Giers welcomed this proposal it is arranged that I shall see His Highness on Monday next, when he returns from Adrianople, and urge upon him the acceptance of the Russo-German proposals. I suggested that the assistance of the French Ambassador might also be usefully invited. Monsieur de Giers agreed and said that he would ask the representatives of all the Great Powers to take similar action.

I have, &c.

LOUIS MALLET.

No. 586.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 55193/19208/13/44.

(No. 978.)

Sir,

Constantinople, D. December 1, 1913.

R. December 8, 1913.

With reference to my despatch No. 963 of the 27th ultimo,⁽²⁾ I called upon the Grand Vizier to-day on his return from Adrianople and told His Highness that I regretted to hear from the Russian and German Ambassadors that the negotiations respecting a project of reform for the Eastern Vilayets were making no progress.

I reminded His Highness that when I saw him on November 11th⁽³⁾ he told me that he was hopeful of arriving at a satisfactory solution of the question with M. de Giers on the basis of foreign advisers and not of foreign Inspectors General, and that the draft which M. de Giers had communicated to me admitted this concession and seemed to me to be most moderate and conciliatory in character.

His Highness replied that the Turkish Government could not allow the right of the Powers to send them advisers, who would interfere in their internal administration and be in constant communication with the foreign Ambassador. It was wounding to their dignity and would not work in practice. I replied that in July last the Porte had sent in a Note to the Embassies in which they informed them that they proposed to ask the Powers to recommend them European Inspectors-General,⁽⁴⁾ and that I could not understand how, if they were willing to accept foreign Inspectors-General a few months ago, they could now hesitate to accept European Advisers to the Inspectors-General who would themselves be Ottoman subjects. Moreover, from what His Highness had previously said to me I had understood that he was himself in favour of foreign Advisers. It was absolutely essential that the Porte should endeavour to meet the Powers in this matter, and I begged His Highness to use all his influence in this direction. I could assure him that His Majesty's Government had no ulterior motive in giving this advice. They were inspired solely by their desire to see good Government introduced into the provinces with the least possible delay, and by their conviction that the Armenian population, if properly governed, would be a source of strength to the Turkish Government. I said that the Acting Armenian Patriarch, on the occasion of his official visit to me, had told me that the Armenians had no thought of independence: they wanted to live under Ottoman rule and if their lives and property were guaranteed they would prove the most loyal subjects of the Sultan. They had so often been disappointed in the past that unless they were now given some guarantee in the shape of foreign advisers, they could not be expected to have much

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King.]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

⁽³⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 528-9, No. 582.]

⁽⁴⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp. 475-9, No. 538, *encls.*]

faith in the efficacy of reforms. The impression in Europe, and especially in England, where people were deeply interested in the question, would be deplorable, if after all that had happened the assistance of Europe was refused. There was no question of coercion,—of imposing reforms by force, but His Majesty's Government were sincerely anxious to help the Porte, and if their friendly advice was set aside it would be felt in England as a rebuff. I was sincerely anxious that the relations of the two countries should be put on a really sound basis, but so long as the present condition of affairs continued in the provinces there would always be room for misunderstandings. If the Armenian question was satisfactorily dealt with, in a few years there would be no necessity for control, and the Oriental Vilayets would prove to be a source of strength to the Ottoman Government.

His Highness took no exception to my remarks and finally said that he would do his best to meet the Russian proposals in a conciliatory spirit.

I am not, however, very hopeful of his accepting the revised project as it stands.

The situation has changed very much in the last ten days and strong feeling is being shown against any European intervention in the matter of reforms.

Up to that time, although it is fair to say that I had been warned that the Government had set its face against control, it seemed possible that unchauvinistic counsels would prevail.

Co-incidentally however with the crystallisation of Monsieur de Giers' proposals in a draft project which was no doubt presented to the Council of Ministers, a chorus of condemnation has appeared in the native press; attacks upon Russia have succeeded each other, and it is hinted that other Powers are quite ready to let Turkey undertake the task of reform by herself.

In the meantime there are indications of rising feeling against the Armenians. The new Armenian Patriarch has received a threatening letter signed by the "Young Musulmans" warning His Beatitude against interfering in matters concerning the nation and the Government, and intimating that should he not follow this advice the "Young Musulmans" will not be slow to carry out the decisions already taken in the matter. Two days ago an Armenian priest was twice stoned by a band of Musulman youths in a quarter of the capital while the same day an Armenian church was daubed red by apparently a similar hand.

I have the honour to enclose a translation of an article in to-day's *Tasvir-i-efkhar*⁽⁵⁾ which tries to make out that the question of reforms in the Eastern Anatolian Vilayets is one of Christian Europe v[ersus] Islam. Articles of this nature tend to inflame Moslem sentiment and to obscure the fact that Europe's desire to assist in the work of reform is prompted by the conviction that such reforms are as much in the interests of the Moslem Turks and Kurds as of the Christian Armenians.

I have, &c.

LOUIS MALLET.

MINUTES.

Owing to the bulk of the recent despatches on the subject of Armenian reforms, with which it is hardly necessary to trouble the Secretary of State in detail, a careful précis of these papers has been prepared by Mr. Scott in the Eastern Department which summarizes very lucidly the most recent developments. It is attached hereto.

The situation appears to be rapidly growing less satisfactory. The scheme has already been very considerably modified to suit Turkish views, and any further whittling down would be likely to deprive it of any practical value. I doubt whether, in the end, any satisfactory scheme will be adopted unless all the Great Powers honestly unite to insist on its adoption, threatening definite hostile action in case of refusal. I have no confidence that any such united pressure will in fact be exercised. Several of the Powers may be counted upon almost for certain to refrain in fact, however loudly they may disavow any laxity of effort.

So long as this danger of want of cohesion among the Powers is not altogether disposed of, it will not be to the interest of Great Britain to put herself conspicuously forward in leading the assault on the Turkish government, unless H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] are prepared to risk the loss of our whole position in Turkey and the spread of grave commotion in India and possibly Egypt.

⁽⁵⁾ [Not reproduced.]

Sir L. Mallet seems to me, in these circumstances, to be steering a very judicious course, and his attitude and proceedings merit full approval

E. A. C.
Dec[ember] 18.

I am much indebted to Mr. Scott for this useful summary. Sir L. Mallet's action can be entirely approved⁽⁶⁾ There is no chance of united pressure by the Powers when such matters as the German Command and the Aegean Islands are always cropping up to divide them. It is better therefore to whittle down the scheme to something which the Porte will accept than to stand out for what it will resist

E G.

Précis of recent despatches from Sir L. Mallet.

Armenian Reforms.

In September 1913⁽⁷⁾ the Russian Chargé d'Affaires communicated to His Majesty's Government a scheme of reforms in Armenia which was to be pressed upon the Porte by the Russian and German Ambassadors at Constantinople. He was informed on October 3rd that His Majesty's Government approved the arrangement and were prepared to support the scheme.

The proposals were under 6 heads and were briefly as follows:—

(1) The Porte was to ask the Powers to recommend them two Inspectors-General for the two sections of Eastern Anatolia with whom they should conclude contracts to run for a certain number of years and whose successors were to be appointed in a similar manner.

(2) These Inspectors were to have a limited right of appointing and an unrestricted right of dismissing officials in their spheres.

(3) There was to be in each section an elected assembly composed equally of Mussulmans and Christians.

(4) The officials in each section were to be Mussulmans and Christians in equal numbers.

(5) The application of the reforms was to be controlled by the Powers through their Ambassadors at Constantinople and their Consuls.

(6) The Porte were to agree with the Powers regarding the other reforms to be applied.

Sir L. Mallet, during the last month, has written various despatches describing the course of discussions at Constantinople on this subject. The following summary of their contents gives all the explanation that is necessary in order to follow His Excellency's despatch No. 978 received on Dec[ember] 8th.

On November 12th⁽⁸⁾ Sir L. Mallet reported that the Russian Ambassador had for some time been in communication with the Grand Vizier. The latter professed himself all in favour of reforms but would not hear of the intervention of the Powers, though he went so far as to state that the Porte were desirous of employing foreign officials to assist in carrying out the reforms. Monsieur de Giers seemed to think it might be necessary eventually, if the Porte remained obdurate, to compromise by agreeing to the Inspectors being Ottoman subjects with foreign advisers to assist them and this view was shared by the German Ambassador. He continued however to pursue the subject with the Grand Vizier and received a note on November 7th,⁽⁹⁾ containing the Porte's counter proposals. In it the Porte made no mention of *European* Inspection-General (the note in fact being headed "Des conseillers étrangers qui seront adjoints aux Inspecteurs-Généraux") and merely spoke of the employment of foreign advisers, saying nothing about their method of selection, though, as Sir L. Mallet observed, it was presumably meant that the Powers should be asked to recommend them. The powers conferred on the advisers in the Note were of a vague character and no provision was made for the enforcement of their views in cases of disagreement with the Inspectors-General, disputes between the two relating to "inspection and reports" being left ultimately to the decision of the Council of Ministers. Finally no mention was made in the Note of control by the Powers or of the scope of the reforms.

On November 11th⁽¹⁰⁾ Sir L. Mallet had an interview with the Grand Vizier and informed him of His Majesty's Government's desire that the Porte should give the Russo-German

⁽⁶⁾ [In his despatch (No. 465) of December 24, 1913, Sir Edward Grey informed Sir L. Mallet that his action and his language to the Grand Vizier were entirely approved. (F.O. 55193/19208/13/44.)]

⁽⁷⁾ [Unsigned marginal note: "M. de Etter Sept[ember] 25 (44555/13)" (*v. supra*, pp. 520-1, No. 571).]

⁽⁸⁾ [Unsigned marginal note: "Sir L. Mallet No. 933, Nov[ember] 12 (52942/13)" (*v. supra*, pp. 526-7, No. 581).]

⁽⁹⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 527, No. 581, *encl.*]

⁽¹⁰⁾ [Unsigned marginal note: "Sir L. Mallet No. 934, Nov[ember] 13 (52943/13)" (*v. supra*, pp. 528-9, No. 582).]

scheme their most earnest attention, pointing out the danger of their embarking on a scheme of their own, which might entail the engagement of the nationals of one Power only. The Grand Vizier affirmed that the Porte would never accept such an Inspectorate-General as was mentioned in the two Ambassadors' project but said that he hoped to arrive at an agreement with Monsieur de Giers, to whom he had proposed the appointment of foreign advisers instead of foreign Inspectors-General. Sir L. Mallet then informed him of the Prime Minister's declaration that the integrity of the Sultan's dominions was a principle of cardinal interest to Great Britain and pointed out that the maintenance of this integrity would depend largely on the introduction of proper reforms in Armenia, and that it was universally felt that these reforms should be carried out under some form of control by the Ambassadors. He refrained however from entering into anything like a detailed discussion of the proposals made on either side, feeling that it was best to leave this to the Russian Ambassador, as he was sure that a collective representation to the Porte would be fatal. It seemed likely, he added in his despatch, that the Porte was in earnest about carrying out reforms. Talaat Bey was to visit the vilayets and it was important that no action should be taken by the Powers which might irritate the Porte or lead them to take up a position from which they could not retreat.

On November 18th⁽¹¹⁾ Sir L. Mallet was able to report a step forward in the negotiations. The Grand Vizier had submitted to the Russian Ambassador a revised version of the Porte's former Note. In this fresh Note the Porte made two concessions:—

1. They agreed to the foreign advisers being recommended by the Powers, and
2. They no longer required that disputes between the Inspectors-General and the advisers should be decided by the Council of Ministers, but now added instead that no administrative decision was to be taken by the Inspectors-General without previous agreement with the advisers, and that, in case of divergence of view, that of the adviser should prevail if agreement was not reached within one month.

Monsieur de Giers however had refused to accept these proposals and still insisted on the acceptance of the six original points in his discussions with the Grand Vizier. But he told Sir L. Mallet that he thought it most important to conclude the negotiations as soon as possible, before the Porte had raised a loan, and he was therefore inclined to accept such modifications of the six points as did not affect their usefulness. In this view Sir L. Mallet entirely concurred, considering that, in the present disposition of the Porte and the Powers, it was better to get as much as possible out of the Porte without resorting to threats and to retain their goodwill.

Articles published in the course of November in the "Jeune Turc" and the "Tanin"⁽¹²⁾ violently opposing any system of European control showed the degree of opposition which the Powers would be likely to encounter if they tried to force on the Porte the acceptance of the original scheme, and on November 25th⁽¹³⁾ Sir L. Mallet reported that the Russian and German Ambassadors had drawn up a fresh scheme, on the basis of the recent discussions between Monsieur de Giers and the Grand Vizier.⁽¹⁴⁾ This revised project represented in their view, which was shared by Sir L. Mallet, the maximum which the Porte would be likely to accept at the present moment.

The text of this scheme was as follows . . . ⁽¹⁵⁾:—

As compared with the original Russo-German scheme,⁽¹⁶⁾ it will be seen that the condition that the Inspectors General should be European has been dropped, and no mention is made of control by the Powers through their Ambassadors. Even so Monsieur de Giers was not very sanguine that it would be accepted. As regards the two concessions made, Sir L. Mallet considered the first an actual improvement, as he thought it better that the Inspector General should be an Ottoman subject, as giving the administration an Ottoman exterior provided the advisers were given (as they would be by Article 8 in the new scheme) sufficient power to make their control effective, while, as regards European control through the Ambassadors, the Russian and German Ambassadors considered that no mention of this point (on which Turkish opinion is very sensitive) was needed, in view of the provisions of the treaty of Berlin and of the fact that the Ambassadors have an inherent right of intervention.

⁽¹¹⁾ [Unsigned marginal note: "Sir L. Mallet No. 939, Nov[ember] 18 (53083/13)" (*v. supra*, pp. 529-30, No. 583).]

⁽¹²⁾ [Unsigned marginal note: "Sir L. Mallet No. 953, Nov[ember] 24 (53793/13)" (*v. supra*, p. 530, No. 584, note (2)).]

⁽¹³⁾ [Unsigned marginal note: "Sir L. Mallet No. 958, Nov[ember] 25 (54149/13)" (*v. supra*, pp. 530-1, No. 584).]

⁽¹⁴⁾ [For the text of this scheme, *v. supra*, pp. 531-3, No. 584, *encl.*]

⁽¹⁵⁾ [The text given here is omitted as it is identical with that printed *supra*, pp. 531-3, No. 584, *encl.*]

⁽¹⁶⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 520-1, No. 571.]

In presenting this revised scheme, Monsieur de Giers informed the Grand Vizier that it represented the minimum of what the Powers would accept, and added that if it were refused by the Porte, and massacres ensued, he would not answer for what the Russian Government might do. No definite reply had been received from the Porte when Sir L. Mallet last wrote,⁽¹⁷⁾ though at an interview with the Russian Ambassador the Grand Vizier had spoken about a counter-project.

It was clear however that Prince Said Halim was experiencing great opposition in the Council of Ministers, who were strongly opposed to any scheme inspired by the Powers.

After consultation with the Russian Ambassador, Sir L. Mallet agreed to see the Grand Vizier again, and Monsieur de Giers is going to ask all the Representatives of all the Great Powers to take similar action.

Sir L. Mallet has also sent despatches dealing with the following points:—

Nationality of the Advisers

If the Porte were to accept the scheme, the question of the nationality of the advisers would arise⁽¹⁸⁾. The Austrian Ambassador in speaking to Sir L. Mallet on this point gave as his opinion that owing to international jealousy and Turkish mistrust it would be necessary to select them from amongst nationals of the minor Powers. Sir L. Mallet agrees that in the circumstances this is the best course, though not without an expression of regret at the exclusion of Englishmen who would he considers have been especially suited for the work.

Appointment of Gendurmerie Officers for Eastern Anatolia.

Sir L. Mallet has seen General Baumann,⁽¹⁹⁾ the French Commandant of the Gendarmerie and Colonel Hawker and explained to them that His Majesty's Government have told the Porte that pending a decision as to the reforms to be applied in Armenia they hope the Turkish Government will not undertake any administrative changes involving definite and new appointments of a permanent character of British or other officials. General Baumann has explained that the engagement of the European officers comes to an end next June, so that any appointments which are being made are necessarily of a purely provisional character. He added that the action of the Gendarmerie officers, being limited to maintaining order, could have nothing to do with any scheme of reform.

Sir L. Mallet spoke to the Russian Ambassador on the subject. Monsieur de Giers merely said that if the appointments in question were found to be of a permanent nature, they simply would not be recognised and he would so inform the Grand Vizier forthwith.

Appeal to His Majesty's Government for help.

In his despatch No. 944⁽²⁰⁾ Sir L. Mallet encloses a copy of a "Notice Confidentielle" received by him from the President of the Lay Council at the Armenian Patriarchate.

This document starts with a historical sketch of the reforms promised to Armenia, but never carried out, in 1878, 1895 and 1908. It then deals with the present scheme, and after detailing the various points on which the Powers have given way to the Porte, states that under the present proposals of the Porte there will be no control and no guarantee, nothing in fact but promises of reforms whose execution will depend entirely on the good will of the Ottoman Government. It concludes with an appeal for help to His Majesty's Government who alone of the Powers still retains Turkey's confidence, and would assuredly be listened to if they spoke.

Eastern Department. Dec[ember] 13, 1913.

⁽¹⁷⁾ [Unsigned marginal note: "Sir L. Mallet No. 963, Nov[ember] 27 (54387/13)" (v. *supra*, pp. 533-4, No. 585).]

⁽¹⁸⁾ [Unsigned marginal note: "Sir L. Mallet No. 958, Nov[ember] 25 (54149/13)" (v. *supra*, pp. 530-1, No. 584).]

⁽¹⁹⁾ [Unsigned marginal note: "Sir L. Mallet No. 948, Nov[ember] 23 (54382/13)" (Not reproduced as the contents are sufficiently indicated above. F.O. 54382/30825/13/44.)]

⁽²⁰⁾ [Unsigned marginal note: "Sir L. Mallet No. 944, Nov[ember] 28 (54381/13)" (Not reproduced as the contents are sufficiently indicated above. F.O. 54381/19208/13/44.)]

No. 587.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 362/357/14/44.

(No. 1045.)

Constantinople, D. December 31, 1913.

Sir :—

R. January 5, 1914.

With reference to my telegram No. 642 of the 29th instant⁽²⁾ and to my despatch No. 978 of the 2nd instant,⁽³⁾ I have the honour to report that the lengthy discussions respecting Armenian reforms are, it is hoped, on the point of a favourable solution.

In reply to my enquiry, the Grand Vizier told me on Monday last that he had just informed the Russian Ambassador that the Government had decided to ask the Powers verbally to recommend them Foreign Inspectors-General for the Eastern Vilayets, instead of Advisers, in order to overcome the difficulty which had been found in finding an acceptable means of settling differences of opinion which might arise between an European adviser and an Ottoman Inspector-General.

On leaving His Highness, I visited my Russian colleague who confirmed this information. It had been agreed that afternoon, that the Grand Vizier should address himself verbally to the Powers asking them to recommend two Inspectors-General for the Armenian Vilayets and that when the recommendation had been made His Highness should address a note to the Foreign Representatives stating that the Porte proposed to appoint these officials and giving their attributions.

The attributions will be also agreed upon verbally before the Note is written. They are now under discussion and my Russian Colleague hopes that the matter will be settled tomorrow.

The Note will go on to state that in case the Inspectors-General should resign and in case it should be necessary to change them, the Porte "aura recours au même concours bienveillant des Puissances" for the appointment of others. Some discussion is still proceeding as to the omission of the word "même" which is desired by the Porte on the ground that it does not mean anything, there being no previous written communication on the subject to which it could refer. My Russian Colleague attaches importance to the retention of this word and at his suggestion I visited the Grand Vizier again yesterday and begged His Highness to meet our wishes on this small outstanding point. His Highness was very reasonable and promised to do what he could to persuade the Council of State to give way.

My Russian Colleague is satisfied with the result of his negotiations.

It is doubtful how far two foreign Inspectors-General will be able to accomplish much in the way of reforming the vast and scattered provinces over which they will have a nominal control. Much will depend upon the qualities and experience of the candidates selected by the Powers.

The value of the concession lies rather in the satisfaction it will give to the Armenians who have throughout attached importance to the appointment of Inspectors-General and who will regard their presence in the Province as a guarantee of security and better Government. The same satisfaction would not have been felt at the appointment of advisers, the Armenian Patriarch having mentioned to me his disappointment at this proposal.

It is chiefly this aspect of the question which encourages me to think that the concession made by the Porte will have good results.

I have, &c.

LOUIS MALLET.

[⁽¹⁾ This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

[⁽²⁾ Sir L. Mallet's telegram (No. 642) of December 29, 1913, D. 8-30 P.M., R. 9-30 P.M., is not reproduced. It stated that the Grand Vizier had informed the Russian Ambassador that the Porte would ask the Powers verbally to recommend two Inspectors-General for Eastern Anatolia. (F.O. 58507/19208/13/44.)]

[⁽³⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

Sir Edward Grey to Sir L. Mallet.

F.O. 2740/357/14/44.

(No. 37.) Confidential.

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 20, 1914.

Herr V[on] Schubert, Secretary of the German Embassy, called here on the 15th inst[ant] to inform me, in strict confidence, that the German Gov[ernmen]t had been disagreeably surprised to hear that the question of Armenian reforms had been re-opened at Constantinople. When the German Amb[assado]r there went on leave, a fortnight ago, he was under the impression, and so were his Gov[ernmen]t, that the question at that stage had been settled. The German Ch[argé] d'Affaires at Const[antino]ple had now reported that the Russian Amb[assado]r there, when on the point of going on leave, had been stopped and instructed to make the following demands of the Turkish Gov[ernmen]t.

(1) That the names of Inspectors under the Reform Scheme were to be submitted to the foreign Gov[ernmen]ts.

(2) That the provision that 50% of the officials should be Mussulman and 50% non-Mussulman should be a permanent arrangement, and not provisional as had been settled;

(3) That soldiers should serve their time in the army in the districts from which they came;

(4) The Russian Gov[ernmen]t urged that legal reforms should, at once, be introduced.

Herr v[on] Schubert added that, in the opinion of the German Gov[ernmen]t, demands (1) and (4) were new; and demands (2) and (3) would not be acceptable to the Turkish Gov[ernmen]t.⁽¹⁾

On the same day the Turkish Ambassador spoke to Sir A. Nicolson on the subject, and has subsequently addressed to him the two letters, of which copies are enclosed herein.

The points mentioned by Tewfik Pasha differ entirely from those referred to by the German Embassy and I should be glad to receive any obs[ervatio]ns Y[our] E[xc]ellency may have to offer on the subject.

[I am, &c.

E. GREY.]

Enclosure 1 in No. 588.

Communication from Tewfik Pasha.

Particulière.

Turkish Embassy,

Chère Excellence,

London, January 16, 1914.

Me référant à notre conversation d'hier, je m'empresse de vous communiquer ci-après, les trois conditions nouvelles soulevées par l'Ambassadeur de Russie à Constantinople, au sujet de l'application des réformes en Asie Mineure :

1°. "Que jusqu'à ce qu'un nouveau recensement soit fait, les Conseils-généraux des Villayets soient formés par un nombre égal de membres Musulmans et non-musulmans."

2°. "Que les Communautés jouissent du droit d'imposer des taxes à leurs coreligionnaires au profit de leurs écoles."

Enfin 3°. "Que les régiments 'Hamidieh' soient supprimés."

⁽¹⁾ [The despatch to this point is based on a minute by Sir W. Tyrrell with whom the conversation with Herr von Schubert was held. Sir Edward Grey added the following minute to Sir W. Tyrrell's record: "It is disappointing that the Russians and Germans cannot keep hand in hand as regards Armenian Reforms and the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople should not have acted separately in this way. E. G."]

J'espère que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique voudra bien user de Ses bons offices auprès du Gouvernement Russe pour le dissuader d'insister sur ces points qui ne peuvent que retarder la mise en execution des réformes en Anatolie dont la nécessité est des plus urgentes.

Je vous prie de croire, Chère Excellence, à l'assurance de mes sentiments dévoués.

TEVFIK.

Enclosure 2 in No. 588.

Tewfik Pasha to Sir A. Nicolson.

Privée.

Turkish Embassy,

Chère Excellence.

London, January 19, 1914.

A la suite de ma lettre du 16 je viens de recevoir un télégramme de Constantinople m'informant que la question des régiments "Hamidiéh" et celle des écoles viennent d'être réglées d'une manière satisfaisante avec l'Ambassade de Russie. Il ne reste plus en discussion avec le Gouvernement Russe que la demande de la représentation aux Conseils-Généraux des Villayets, sur laquelle la Sublime Porte maintient toujours son point de vue qui est celui de la représentation proportionnelle entre les éléments musulmans et non-musulmans, et non celui de la représentation égale telle qu'elle est réclamée par la Russie; car ce mode arbitraire, comme j'ai eu l'honneur de l'exposer à Votre Excellence, constituerait un empiètement flagrant sur le droit de la majorité qui est musulmane, et créerait une animosité entre les deux éléments, pouvant entraver précisément l'exécution de toute réforme. Toutefois pour donner une preuve de son esprit de conciliation, le Gouvernement Impérial est disposé à accepter jusqu'au prochain recensement la représentation égale des Musulmans et non-musulmans dans les Conseils-Généraux des Villayets de Van et de Bitlis où le nombre de la population non-musulmane n'atteint pourtant pas le tiers de la population totale de ces provinces.

Je ne puis que réitérer à Votre Excellence la prière que je Lui avais adressée dans ma dernière lettre, et La prie d'agréer l'assurance de mes sentiments dévoués.

TEVFIK.

No. 589.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 4583/357/14/44.

(No. 44.) Confidential.

Constantinople, D. January 25, 1914.

Sir,

R. February 2, 1914.

I have had the honour to receive your despatch No. 37 Confidential of January 20th,⁽¹⁾ asking for my observations on the communications from the German and Ottoman Embassies respecting the fresh demands alleged to have been advanced by the Russian Embassy here in the matter of reforms for the Eastern Anatolian Vilayets. The statements of Herr von Schubert as to the four new points said to have been raised by my Russian colleague are not based on fact, as, indeed, is shown by the two communications from the Ottoman Ambassador, and the incident savours of an attempt to go behind the back of the Russian Embassy here, and give an inaccurate impression as to its attitude in the matter.

Point (8) mentioned by Herr von Schubert not only is not unacceptable to the Turkish Government but has long ago been admitted by them all over the Empire and forms part of the new military reorganisation scheme.

(¹) [v. immediately preceding document.]

Neither it nor any of the other three points raised by the Secretary of the German Embassy is new, as will be evident from a reference to the draft project enclosed in my despatch No. 958 of November 25,⁽²⁾ which was drawn up by M. de Giers after consultation with the German Ambassador.

The only one that is under discussion with the Porte is No. (2),—i.e., the representation of the Mussulman and non-Mussulman elements on an equality as opposed to a proportional basis.⁽³⁾ Far from being a fresh demand, it forms one of the Russian proposals in July last, and was included in the draft project referred to above. As a solution is on the point of being arrived at in this matter, any further remarks would be purely academical.

The Communication of the German Embassy is evidence of the impression which has prevailed here that the Turkish Government would have agreed some time since to the Russian proposals, had they not been supported in their resistance by some outside influence.

I was aware that Herr von Mutius thought that it would be impossible to persist in a demand for parity of representation in all the Vilayets, and I had, at his suggestion and at that of Talaat Bey, discussed this point with my Russian colleague in order, if possible, to arrive at some compromise which might be acceptable to the Armenians.

I have, &c.

LOUIS MALLET.

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 531-2, No 584, *encl.*]

⁽³⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's despatch (No. 27) to Sir E. Goschen of January 29, 1914, enclosed a memorandum from the Ottoman Embassy which had been communicated to Prince Lichnowsky on that day. It referred to the question of Mussulman and non-Mussulman representation in the vilayets. Prince Lichnowsky said that the German Government supported the Turkish view that proportional representation was reasonable. (F.O. 4947/357/14/44)]

No. 590.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 4587/357/14/44.

(No. 48.)

Sir:—

Constantinople, D. January 28, 1914.

R. February 2, 1914.

The hopes of an immediate conclusion of the discussion respecting Armenian reform which I reported as probable in my despatch No. 1045 of December 31st⁽²⁾ were not fulfilled, but I am now able to transmit to you the result of the subsequent discussions from which it will be seen that substantial progress has been made and that there is only one point outstanding which has not yet received a satisfactory solution—namely the question of parity of representation in the general Assemblies and Administrative Councils.

The delay in concluding the negotiations has been due to differences of opinion with the Porte as to the nature of the instructions which shall be addressed to the Inspectors-General and as to the attributions which shall be conferred upon them.

It will be seen from the enclosed draft of the Note which the Porte is to address to the Ambassadors, in accordance with the procedure indicated in my previous despatch, that sufficiently full powers will be given to the Inspectors General to enable them, at any rate on paper, to control the Administration of the Eastern Vilayets. The Porte has accorded them the right to revoke all officials whose incompetence and bad conduct are proved and they are even enabled in special circumstances to suspend judicial functionaries, on condition of referring the case immediately to the Department of Justice.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the Cabinet.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 539, No. 587.]

The only officials excepted from this provision are the Valis whose dependence upon the Inspector-General it was impossible for the Russian Ambassador to induce the Porte to accept. They argued that the subordination of the Valis to the Inspectors-General would be inconsistent with their whole system of provincial Government, and that, as the authority of the Valis was derived direct from the Padishah, His Imperial Majesty alone could appoint and remove them. The Grand Vizier with whom I discussed the question told me, moreover, that he would be faced with the resignations of all the best Valis in the country if this provision were adopted and that they would not be able to obtain the services in the future of any but second-rate men. Without attaching undue importance to these arguments, as it was perfectly clear that insistence would only result in a deadlock, Monsieur de Giers finally decided to give way and to accept the clause inserted in the annexed draft Note, under which it is agreed that in the cases of acts committed by Valis requiring urgent attention, the Inspector General should submit the question to the Ministry of Interior by telegram and that the matter shall be decided in 4 days time. This affords in my opinion a satisfactory compromise and it is unlikely that the Valis will push matters to extremities in view of the very wide powers with which the Inspectors-General will be invested in regard to the dismissal of the subordinate officials.

I also discussed the question myself with Talaat Bey and in reply to my remark that the Porte might decide a dispute between the Inspector-General and the Vali in favour of the latter, His Excellency replied that such a solution was not probable, as it would result in the resignation of the Inspector-General and in the consequent obligation on the part of the Turks to apply to the Powers for the nomination of another.

In regard to the wording of the clause referring to the nomination of new Inspectors-General—should the post become at any time vacant, as to which I reported previously there was some difficulty, it will be seen that a form has been adopted which meets the objections of the Porte.

The three questions which have given rise to most discussion have been that respecting the maintenance of the schools in the Eastern Vilayets, the abolition of the Hamidié regiments, and parity of representation between Christians and Mussulmans in the General Assemblies and administrative Councils; the Porte contending in respect of the Article relating to schools that it was impossible for them to allow the Armenians to collect and spend their own share of the school tax in accordance with the original proposals. The draft now agreed upon is upon the whole of a satisfactory nature. In regard to the abolition of the Hamidié regiments, the Government would not consent to so categorical a wording as that suggested by Monsieur de Giers, but a compromise has been found which provides for the transformation of these regiments into a cavalry reserve and for their disarmament except in the case of mobilisation and manœuvres. Placed under the orders of the Commander of the Army Corps, they will be obliged to serve for one year in the army. I think that it may be considered that this provision is, on the whole, satisfactory.

The article relating to parity of representation is still under discussion.

You will observe that the draft article proposes that until a census is completed the members elected to the General Assemblies and the Administrative Councils should be elected on a half and half basis, except in the case of Trebizonde, where the Armenians are admittedly in a very small minority. The Turkish Government would not agree to the provision maintaining that in many parts of the country the Armenians were in a minority and that there would be danger in admitting the principle of equal representation where the Mussulman population was preponderant. Since this draft was submitted the Turkish Government are ready to grant the Russian demands in the case of Van and Bitlis and my Russian colleague hopes to get Kharput also included, but the discussion is still proceeding and I hope to be able shortly to inform you that a compromise has been reached which will be acceptable to the Armenian community, with which my Russian colleague has, I understand, been in confidential communication.

I have kept in close touch with the Russian Embassy throughout the negotiations, and have on frequent occasions supported Monsieur de Giers and latterly Monsieur Goulkevitch in their representations.

I had no reason to suppose until I received your despatch No. 87 of January 20th,⁽³⁾ to which I am replying separately,⁽⁴⁾ that the German Chargé d'Affaires was not in substantial agreement with my Russian colleague, although he on one occasion expressed to me the opinion that Monsieur de Giers was too uncompromising in his demands.

I should be glad to be informed whether you approve the terms of the draft Note which it is proposed that the Porte should address to the representatives of the Great Powers.⁽⁵⁾

I have, &c.

LOUIS MALLET.

Enclosure in No. 590.

Note.

Deux Inspecteurs Généraux étrangers seront placés à la tête des deux secteurs de l'Anatolie Orientale A et B

Les Inspecteurs Généraux auront le contrôle de l'administration, de la justice, de la police et de la gendarmerie de leur secteur.

Dans les cas où les forces de sûreté publique s'y trouveraient insuffisantes, sur la demande de l'Inspecteur Général, les forces militaires devront être mises à sa disposition pour l'exécution des mesures prises dans les limites de sa compétence.

Les Inspecteurs Généraux révoquent, selon le cas, tous les fonctionnaires dont ils auront constaté l'insuffisance ou la mauvaise conduite en déférant à la justice ceux qui se seraient rendus coupables d'un acte punissable; ils remplacent les fonctionnaires subalternes révoqués par des nouveaux titulaires remplissant les conditions d'admission et de capacité prévues par les lois et règlements. Ils auront le droit de présenter à la nomination du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté le Sultan les fonctionnaires supérieures. De toutes les mesures de révocation prises ils préviennent immédiatement les Ministères compétents par des dépêches télégraphiques brièvement motivées, suivies dans la huitaine du dossier de ces fonctionnaires et d'un exposé des motifs détaillé.

Dans des cas graves nécessitant des mesures urgentes les Inspecteurs-Généraux jouiront d'un droit de suspension immédiate à l'égard des fonctionnaires inamovibles de l'ordre judiciaire à la condition d'en déférer immédiatement les cas au Département de la Justice.

Dans les cas où il serait constaté des actes commis par les Valis nécessitant l'emploi des mesures de rigueur urgentes, les Inspecteurs Généraux soumettront par télégraphe le cas au Ministère de l'intérieur qui en saisira immédiatement le Conseil des Ministres, lequel statuera dans un délai maximum de quatre jours après la réception du télégramme de l'Inspecteur Général.

Les conflits agraires seront tranchés sous la surveillance directe des Inspecteurs Généraux;

Des instructions plus détaillées relatives à leurs devoirs et à leurs attributions seront élaborées après leur nomination et avec leur concours.

Dans le cas où durant le terme de dix années les postes des Inspecteurs Généraux deviendraient vacants, la Sublime Porte compte pour le choix des dix (*sic*) Inspecteurs Généraux sur le concours bienveillant des Grandes Puissances.

Les lois, décrets et avis officiels seront publiés dans chaque secteur dans les langues locales. Chaque partie aura le droit devant les tribunaux et devant l'adminis-

⁽³⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 540, No. 588.]

⁽⁴⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

⁽⁵⁾ [Sir Edward Grey informed Sir L. Mallet in his telegram (No. 83) of February 11, 1914, D. 4-15 P.M., that he approved the draft note. (F.O. 4587/357/14/44.)]

tration de faire usage de sa langue, lorsque l'Inspecteur Général le jugera possible. Les jugements des tribunaux seront libellés en turc et accompagnés, si possible, d'une traduction dans la langue des parties.

La part de chaque élément ethnique ("ounsour") dans le budget de l'instruction publique de chaque Vilayet sera déterminé proportionnellement à sa participation aux impôts perçus pour l'instruction publique. Le Gouvernement Impérial ne fera aucune entrave à ce que dans les communautés les coreligionnaires contribuent à l'entretien de leurs écoles.

Tout ottoman devra accomplir son service militaire en temps de paix et de tranquillité dans la région de l'Inspectorat militaire qu'il habite. Toutefois, le Gouvernement Impérial enverra jusqu'à nouvel ordre dans les localités éloignées du Yémen, de l'Assir et du Nedjd des contingents de l'armée de terre prélevés de toutes les parties de l'Empire Ottoman proportionnellement aux populations y établies; il enrôlera en outre dans l'armée de mer les conscrits pris dans tout l'Empire en observant le même principe de la proportion.⁽⁶⁾

Les régiments Hamidié seront transformés en cavalerie de réserve.

Leurs armes seront conservées dans les dépôts militaires et ne leur seront distribuées qu'en cas de mobilisation ou de manœuvres. Ils seront placés sous les ordres des Commandants de corps d'armée dont la zone comprend la circonscription où ils se trouvent. En temps de paix les Commandants des régiments, d'escadrons et de sections seront choisis parmi les officiers de l'armée Impériale Ottomane active. Les soldats de ces régiments seront soumis au service militaire d'un an. Pour y être admis ils devront se pourvoir par eux-même de leurs chevaux avec tout l'équipement de ceux-ci. Toute personne, sans distinction de race ou de religion, se trouvant dans la circonscription, qui se soumettrait à ces exigences, pourra être enrolée dans lesdits régiments. Réunies en cas de manœuvres ou de mobilisation ces troupes seront soumises aux mêmes règles disciplinaires que les troupes régulières.

La compétence des Assemblées Générales des Vilayets est fixée d'après les principes de la loi du 13 Mars 1929 (1913).

⁽⁶⁾ [The words "en observant le même principe de la proportion" were omitted in the text enclosed in the immediately succeeding document.]

No. 591.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 6862/357/14/44.

(No. 86.)

Sir,

Constantinople, D. February 9, 1914.

R. February 16, 1914.

I have the honour to confirm my telegram No. 91 of the 8th,⁽¹⁾ informing you that an agreement had been arrived at upon the last outstanding difference between the Russian Government and the Porte in regard to Armenian reforms,—namely the question of representation.

I enclose a copy of the Note which the Grand Vizier will address to the Representatives of the Great Powers as soon as the candidates for the post of Inspectors General shall have been agreed upon, and I hope that its terms will have your approval.

I need not recapitulate the course of the negotiations which have led to the present settlement, as I have kept you fully informed of their progress. I think on the whole that the Turkish Government have shown a reasonable desire to meet the wishes of the Powers, and that considering the complexity of the question raised

⁽¹⁾ [Sir L. Mallet's telegram (No. 91) of February 8, 1914, D. 9 P.M., R. 11 P.M., is not reproduced, as the contents are sufficiently indicated above. (F.O. 5721/357/14/44)]

and the divergent interests at stake, credit is due to them for having accepted the scheme in a form which is satisfactory to the Armenian Patriarch. The Russian Ambassador who is now on leave of absence, showed great tenacity of purpose and energy in conducting the negotiations, which the Russian Chargé d'Affaires Monsieur Goulkévitch has brought to a happy conclusion by his conciliatory and reasonable attitude.

I have kept in close touch with the Russian Embassy, throughout the negotiations and in cases of difference of opinion with the Porte I have used my best endeavours to promote an understanding.

I have, &c.

LOUIS MALLET.

Enclosure in No. 591.

Note to be addressed to Representatives of Great Powers.

Deux Inspecteurs-Généraux étrangers seront placés à la tête des deux secteurs de l'Anatolie Orientale: Mr. A. . . . à la tête de celui comprenant les vilayets d'Erzeroum, Trébizonde et Sivas; et Mr. B. . . . à la tête de celui comprenant les vilayets de Van, Bitlis, Kharpout, Diarbékir. . . .⁽²⁾

Un recensement définitif—auquel il sera procédé sous la surveillance des Inspecteurs-Généraux dans le plus bref délai lequel autant que possible ne dépassera par un an—établira la proportion exacte des différentes religions, nationalités et langues dans les deux secteurs. En attendant les membres élus aux Conseils Généraux (Medjilissi Oumoumi) et aux comités (Endjoumen) des Vilayets de Van et Bitlis seront par moitié musulmans et non-musulmans. Dans le Vilayet d'Erzeroum, si le recensement définitif n'est pas effectué dans un délai d'un an, les membres du Conseil Général seront de même élus sur la base de l'Egalité comme dans les deux Vilayets susnommés. Dans les Vilayets de Sivas, Kharpout et Diarbékir les membres des Conseils généraux seront dès à présent élus sur la base du principe de la proportionnalité. A cet effet jusqu'au recensement définitif le nombre des électeurs musulmans restera déterminé d'après les listes ayant servi de base aux dernières élections et le nombre des non-musulmans sera fixé d'après les listes qui seront présentées par leurs communautés. Si cependant des difficultés matérielles rendaient ce système électoral provisoire impraticable les Inspecteurs-Généraux auront le droit de proposer pour la répartition des sièges aux Conseils Généraux des trois vilayets Sivas, Kharpout et Diarbékir une autre proportion plus conforme aux besoins et aux conditions actuelles des dits vilayets.

Dans tous les Vilayets où les Conseils Généraux seront élus sur la base du principe de la proportionnalité la minorité sera représentée dans les Comités (Endjoumen).

Les membres élus aux Conseils Administratifs seront comme par le passé par moitié musulmans et non-musulmans.

A moins que les Inspecteurs-Généraux n'y voient d'inconvénient, le principe d'égalité entre musulmans et non-musulmans sera appliqué pour le recrutement de la police et de la gendarmerie dans les deux secteurs, à mesure que les postes deviendraient vacants. Le même principe d'égalité sera appliqué autant que possible pour la répartition de toutes les autres fonctions publiques dans les deux secteurs.

(2) [The text of the enclosure in the immediately preceding document follows here exactly except for the amendment given *supra*, p. 545, note (6). The document then continues as shown above.]

No. 592.

*Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.**Constantinople, February 17, 1914.*

F.O. 7286/357/14/44.

D. 4.20 P.M.

Tel. (No. 111.)

R. 5.50 P.M.

Grand Vizier and Minister of Interior have asked me to find out unofficially whether His Majesty's Government would lend them an official to act as director-general of the inspectors of the vilayets. He would be attached to the Ministry of the Interior, and would advise on all questions of administration of all the vilayets.

I replied that I would refer the request to you.

I would recommend compliance. I do not think that Russia could reasonably object to such an appointment.

Turkish Government attach much importance to your consent, and they will not apply officially until they have your reply.

MINUTES.

I think we should instruct Sir L. Mallet to say that provided the position of the official in the Ministry of the Interior is not such as to place him in direct, superior, authority over the Inspector-Generals we should agree.

E. A. C.

Feb[ruary] 18.

We should first obtain more detailed inform[atio]n as to the functions of the proposed new official—but we should point out to Sir L. Mallet:—

1. That in order to secure agreement the inspectors-general were selected from minor Powers—and not from any Great Power.

2. That to app[oin]t a supervisory official, selected from a Great Power, over these inspectors would constitute a departure from the views which dictated the selection from minor Powers—and would be contrary to the general spirit of the reform scheme⁽¹⁾—which we understand gives large and comparatively independent powers to the inspectors-general—A “director general” would necessarily curtail both the independence and the power of the inspectors.

A. N.

Bring up to-morrow.

E. G.

18 2 14.

⁽¹⁾ [Marginal comment by Sir A. Nicolson: “This sh[oul]d be verified.” [A. N.]]

No. 593.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir L. Mallet.

F.O. 7286/357/14/44.

Tel. (No. 96.)

Foreign Office, February 19, 1914, 6 P.M.

Your tel[egram] No. 111.⁽¹⁾

Before sending a reply as to proposed appointment of a director general, I should like to be furnished with more precise information as to his functions, and especially as to his official status in respect to the two foreign inspectors-general of the Armenian Vilayets. The latter are advisedly to be selected from minor Powers, and if the Director-General is to supervise them or in any way to control them, it is probable that the objections which weighed against employment of subjects of a Great Power in the lesser post would be even more strenuously urged in the case of a higher post. Moreover in the project of Armenian reforms no provision was made for a functionary such as Director-General, and his app[ointmen]t might be viewed as tending to curtail

⁽¹⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

the wide and comprehensive powers which very properly have been granted to the inspectors-general.

In fact to super-impose upon the scheme of Armenian reforms a director-General chosen from a Great Power would upset the whole scheme and the agreement respecting it now arrived at between Turkey and the Powers.

But I desire not to refuse every demand of the Turkish Gov[ernmen]t and if what they really want is an adviser to the Ministry of the Interior in a position analogous to that desired for the Ministry of Justice I would do my best to meet their views.

No. 594.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 11264/357/14/44.

(No. 145.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 11, 1914.

I told the French and Russian Ambassadors to-day of the German suggestion that two Inspectors-General for Armenia should be chosen by a reunion of Ambassadors in, for instance, Constantinople.⁽²⁾

I said that something ought to be done, or the Turkish Government, who had asked the Powers to recommend two Inspectors-General, would hold the Powers responsible for what happened if no Inspectors were appointed. I had understood that the Russian Government did not object to Dutch Inspectors and, if no one objected to them, it was hardly necessary to use the machinery of a reunion of Ambassadors: the Ministers in The Hague might be instructed to apply to the Dutch Government for the Inspectors. But, in any case, something ought to be done.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch was repeated to St. Petersburg (No. 98).]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. G.P., XXXVIII, p. 185*]

[*ED. NOTE.*—On March 16, Count Benckendorff communicated a circular telegram from M. Sazonov suggesting the appointment of two Belgian officers. (F.O. 11895/357/14/44.) *cp. Imperialism*, 1st Ser., Vol. II, p. 2, No. 2. Sir Edward Grey informed Sir L. Mallet, in his telegram (No. 157), of March 21, 1914, D. 11.30 a.m., that the appointment of two Dutch officers had also been approved by the Russian Government. Sir L. Mallet was authorized to join in the submission of these names to the Porte when his colleagues were similarly instructed. (F.O. 12272/357/14/44.) *cp. G.P., XXXVIII, pp. 186-8*]

No. 595.

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 16616/357/14/44.

Tel. (No. 238.)

Constantinople, April 15, 1914.

I am informed officially that the Porte have selected Messrs. Hoff⁽²⁾ and Westenenk⁽³⁾ as the two inspectors-general of the eastern vilayets.

⁽¹⁾ [The text given above is taken from the copy in the *Confidential Print*, as the original decypher cannot be traced.]

⁽²⁾ [Major Hoff, Norwegian Army.]

⁽³⁾ [Mr. Westenenk, Dutch East Indian Service]

CHAPTER LXXXIX.

THE POTSDAM MEETING.

[*ED. NOTE.*—For the subject of this chapter *cp G.P.*, XXVII (II), Chapters 218-9; S. Sazonov: *Fateful Years* (London, 1928), pp. 26-42; Sir G. Buchanan: *My Mission to Russia and other Diplomatic Memories* (London, 1923), Vol. I, pp. 93-8.]

No. 596.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1015.

St. Petersburg, October 10, 1910.

36821/36821/10/44A.

D. 3.45 P.M.

Tel. (No. 276.)

R. 4.30 P.M.

I hear Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs has been summoned to attend the meeting of the Russian and German Emperors, which is, as I understand, to take place in Potsdam early next month. It has been intimated from Berlin that the principal subject of discussion is to be the Persian Railways question: and I am told that Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] contemplates taking with him an expert on the question.

Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] has not yet mentioned matter to me, but when he does so, I will impress on him the necessity of solidarity between the two Governments.

It will be undesirable that he should know that I have received above information.

MINUTES.

Mr. O'Beirne might be told by telegraph⁽²⁾ to endeavour to bring M. Sazonoff on to the subject of the reported meetings of the two Emperors—and to elicit whether any matters of common interest to Russia and England are likely to be discussed. He could then impress on M. Sazonoff that of course the Russian Gov[ernment] will keep H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] fully informed and will not conclude an arrangement as to Persian or Bagdad railways without consultation with us and France.

A. N.
E. G.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Berlin.]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately succeeding document.]

No. 597.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. O'Beirne.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1015.

Foreign Office, October 11, 1910.

36821/36821/10/44A.

Tel. (No. 618.)

D. 5.40 P.M.

Your tel[egram] No. 276.⁽²⁾

You should take an opportunity of bringing M. Sazonoff on to the subject of the meeting of the two Emperors and to elicit whether any matters of common interest to Russia and England are likely to be discussed.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Berlin (No. 108).]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

You could then impress on M. Sazonoff that of course the Russian Gov[ernmen]t will keep H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] fully informed and will not conclude any arrangements as to Persian or Bagdad R[ailwa]y without consultation with us and France.

No. 598.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 371/1015.

St. Petersburg, October 12, 1910.

37096/36821/10/44A.

D. 7·50 P.M.

Tel. (No. 277.) Confidential.

R. 9·50 P.M.

Your telegram No. 618.⁽¹⁾

I touched on meeting of the two Emperors in conversation with Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs to-day. He stated in confidence that the meeting was to take place next month in Potsdam and that he would probably attend, although he had not yet received Emperor of Russia's orders. He was evidently not inclined to say more, and I thought it better not to press him. I shall have many opportunities of returning to the subject.

(¹) [v. immediately preceding document.]

No. 599.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1015.

St. Petersburg, October 17, 1910.

37799/36821/10/44A.

D. 8·20 P.M.

Tel. (No. 282.)

R. 10·30 P.M.

My telegram No. 277.⁽²⁾

I said to-day to the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs that I supposed one of the subjects of conversation at Potsdam would be the Bagdad Railway. He said yes, and more particularly the question of the junction of Bagdad-Khanikin branch with the future Persian railways. I impressed on him that His Majesty's Government of course hoped that he would keep them fully informed of anything that passed regarding the Bagdad Railway and Persia, and that he would conclude nothing without consulting them (and, as regards the Bagdad Railway, France also).

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs said that if Germany raised the question of the neutral zone in Persia he would state that he was [not]⁽³⁾ prepared to discuss it. He said that he considered it necessary that on this subject England and Russia should concert together. He was not clear how far it would be possible to exclude Germany from that sphere.

As regards the Russian zone, he must tell me that Russia had already, in their former negotiations with Germany, bound themselves to agree to the junction of the Bagdad-Khanikin branch with a railway to be eventually built by Russia from the frontier to Tehran. In return for that concession she would insist that Germany

(¹) [A copy of this telegram was sent to the India Office.]

(²) [v. immediately preceding document.]

(³) [The paraphrase of this telegram printed in the *Confidential Print* has "not" here; so also does Mr. O'Beirne's despatch (No 420), D. October 18, R. October 24, which extends this telegram. (F.O. 371/1015. 38567/36821/13/44A.) cp. also *infra*, p. 553, No. 602.]

should seek for no concessions of a territorial character, including railways, in the Russian sphere. If Germany agreed to this stipulation Russia would feel bound to conclude the bargain. It was of extreme importance to her to prevent Germany from obtaining a concession for a railway to Tehran. In conclusion the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs said that I could rest assured that as soon as he returned from Potsdam he would tell me all that had passed.

MINUTES.

As regards the neutral zone in Persia the attitude of the Russian M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] seems satisfactory. Our interest has, as regards that zone, been held to be that, *inter alia*, Germany should not make an extension of the Bagdad Railway in at any rate any part of Persia south of the Russian zone: and presumably our position is safeguarded by the terms of the joint note communicated to the Persian Gov[ernment] on April 7th last,⁽⁴⁾ which contained a passage as follows:—

“En outre, nous avons l'honneur de vous faire savoir que l'Angleterre et la Russie, tout en ne pas entravant les droits des nationaux d'autres Puissances aux entreprises purement commerciales en Perse, ne peuvent en aucun cas admettre qu'il soit accordé aux nationaux d'autres Puissances étrangères des concessions qui puissent porter atteinte à leurs intérêts politiques ou stratégiques en Perse.”

It was originally proposed to specify the concessions, such as those for railways, roads, telegraphs, ports, etc., but this proposal was dropped.

In regard to the neutral zone, we must be most careful to have the refusal of constructing a port at Khon Musa, as it is practically the only good alternative to Koweit for a railway terminus.

As regards the last paragraph of this telegram, so far as I can discover it is quite new to us that the Russian Gov[ernment] had already bound themselves to agree to the junction of the Bagdad-Khanikin line with a railway to be eventually built by Russia from the frontier to Tehran.

What we actually did know is contained in Sir E. Grey's despatch No. 438 of December 31st, 1907,⁽⁵⁾ to Sir A. Nicolson, and especially in Sir E. Grey's despatch No. 44 of Feb[ruary] 22nd, 1908,⁽⁶⁾ to Sir A. Nicolson (both papers are annexed)

A. P.

October 18th, 1910

(See No. 37950⁽⁷⁾ which contains private telegraphic correspondence between Sir A. Nicolson and Mr. O'Beirne.)

A. P.

Would it be prudent to telegraph as follows:—

Y[ou]r tel[egram] No. 282.

With regard to neutral zone, if it is necessary to discuss it at all it is important that the Russian G[overnment] should not commit themselves, without consulting us, to any particular concession. Strategical or political concessions more especially ports or means of communication are of course excluded from discussion.

L. M.

It is certainly news to me that Russia had bound herself to a junction of the two lines. I have little doubt that Germany would agree to giving assurances as to abstaining from troubling Russia in the Russian sphere—if she could obtain a good quid pro quo—The junction is not one as, according to M. Sazonoff it has already been accorded, and I cannot imagine that M. Iswolsky

(1) [*v. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. VI, p. 452, No. 343, note (2). *cp.* also *infra*, pp. 743, 744–5, No. 747. The text is contained in F.O. 371/954. 15837/8172/10/34.]

(2) [*v. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. VI, p. 101, *Ed note*, and note (1).]

(3) [*v. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. VI, p. 358, No. 253.]

(7) [Mr. O'Beirne's private telegram to Sir A. Nicolson of October 17, 1910, D. 8.25 P.M., R. 9.30 P.M., stated that M. Sazonov “appeared to consider that he c[oul]d not make the conclusion of an arrangement wh[ich] he thought satisfactory as regards the Russian sphere dependent on our concluding a corresponding arrangement resp[ectin]g the British sphere.” Sir A. Nicolson's reply of October 18, D. 1.15 P.M., emphasized the importance of Russian consultation of France and Britain. “We have always,” he said, “maintained the standpoint that though negotiations with Germany might be concluded à deux no final arrang[emen]t should be made except à quatre. It would be unfortunate were the Russian Gov[ernment] to adopt a different attitude—and if they did so it would react on the community of action which it is so necessary should be preserved between us and Russia.” (F.O. 371/1015. 37950/36821/10/44A.)]

agreed to the junction without receiving anything in exchange It seems to me there must be some misunderstanding.

I should suggest a tel[egram] to Mr. O'Beirne.⁽⁸⁾

A N
E G.

We now know by inference what the Russian attitude to the Bagdad r[ailwa]y will be: they will put in no claim for the Bagdad-Khanikin branch themselves and will claim as a quid pro quo German exclusion from their sphere in Persia.

It will be time enough to discuss the effect of this upon our position when I come to London.

E G.
19.10.10

(8) [This telegram was despatched as No. 635 on October 20, *v. infra*, p 553, No. 601]

No. 600.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 371/1015.

St. Petersburg, October 19, 1910.

38086/36821/10/44A.

D. 8.10 P.M.

Tel. (No. 283.) Confidential.

R. 9.15 P.M.

My immediately preceding telegram.⁽¹⁾

I returned to-day to subject of approaching interview, and strongly urged on Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs importance of concluding nothing without previous consultation with His Majesty's Government. Result of our conversation was as follows :—

There is one single matter as to which Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs informs His Majesty's Government beforehand that he will have to yield to the desire of Germany, viz., that Khanikin shall form point of junction of Bagdad and Persian railway systems. To this concession Russia is practically bound already, and it mainly affects Russian interests. Nothing, however, will be signed at Potsdam on the subject.

As regards stipulations which Russia will make concerning concessions in Russian sphere, nothing will be signed at Potsdam. If as a result of conversation there is occasion for an exchange of notes, Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs will say that he will draft Russian note on his return to St. Petersburg. He will submit text before signature to His Majesty's Government, and he will inform me of "every syllable" exchanged at interview.

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs is extremely anxious that nothing should be known in Berlin of the undertaking which he is giving to His Majesty's Government.

MINUTES.

It is hardly accurate to say that the junction at Khanikin "mainly affects Russian interests." A large amount of British trade with Russia (about £750,000 a year) passes via Bagdad. However, I have personally never believed that we could get the Khanikin branch for ourselves, as was at one time hoped: and, if this is so, I do not see that we can do anything to prevent a junction being arranged now. There will probably be a dispute as to what is to be the gauge of the line from Khanikin to Tehran. Germany has told us she wants it to be the same as that of the Bagdad R[ai]l[wa]y, which will not suit Russia. On the whole, this tel[egram] seems fairly satisfactory, but the important point for us is not principally the Khanikin branch but the neutral zone.

A. P.
October 20, 1910.
R. P. M.
A. N.

(1) [*v. immediately preceding document.*]

We cannot object to an agreement that there is to be a junction at Khanikin: we could hardly ask the Russians to refuse that in order to secure the Bagdad-Khanikin branch to us. If we are to get that branch we must squeeze it out of the Germans ourselves and I have never seen how we are to do that.

E. G.

No. 601.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. O'Beirne.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1015.
37799/36821/10/44A.
Tel. (No. 635.)

Foreign Office, October 20, 1910.
D. 2.30 P.M.

Your telegram No. 282.⁽²⁾

It is not clear how Russia could claim a *quid pro quo* for a concession which she has already granted. Surely if she agreed to the junction of the two lines she could have claimed her *quid pro quo* then, and not delay it for a subsequent occasion. Could you ascertain from M. Sazonow whether in former negotiations she unconditionally agreed to the junction? As regards the neutral zone, you could remind M. Sazonow of the joint note to the Persian Government of 7th April,⁽³⁾ and express hope that Russian Government will not commit themselves to any particular concession regarding that zone without consulting us.

⁽¹⁾ [A copy of this telegram was sent to the India Office.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 550-1, No. 599.]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 551, No. 599, *min.*, and *note* ⁽¹⁾]

No. 602.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 371/1015.
38466/36821/10/44A.
(No. 284.)

St. Petersburg, D. October 21, 1910, 11.15 P.M.
R. October 22, 1910, 8 A.M.

Your telegram No. 635.⁽¹⁾

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs distinctly said on 17th October that Russia had bound herself to the junction, but on 19th October he talked of being "practically bound," and said that it would be excessively difficult not to agree to it. I conclude there is still room for a bargain.

As regards neutral zone, Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, as you are aware, states that he will entirely refuse to discuss it at Potsdam.⁽²⁾ I have already reminded him of the terms of our joint warning to the Persian Government (my despatch No. 420⁽³⁾ sent by bag), but I gather that Russian Government do not think phrase "ways of communication, telegraphs, and ports" used in joint note of 20th May⁽⁴⁾ includes all the concessions which could affect our political or strategical interests.

I will take an early opportunity to discuss matter further with Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs.

⁽¹⁾ [*v. immediately preceding document.*]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 550-1, No. 599.]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 550, No. 599, *note* ⁽³⁾.]

⁽⁴⁾ [*cp. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. VI, p. 490, No. 375, and *note* ⁽¹⁾. The text is contained in F.O. 371/954. 20032/8172/10/34.]

MINUTES

I think that enough has been said to M. Sazonoff—though it is not clear as to how the case of the 'junction' exactly stands. He has promised to refuse 'entirely' to discuss the neutral zone and to tell us all that passes at Potsdam, and he is fully aware of our views as to negotiations à deux, and final arrang[emen]ts à quatre. We had better leave the matter there. Further pressure might cause irritation and an impression that we had doubts as to his good faith. Nevertheless it w[oul]d be well for Sir E. Goschen (as undoubtedly he will) to keep as much as possible in touch with M. Sazonow when the latter is at Berlin.

A. N.

I agree

E. G.

No. 608.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 371/1015.

St. Petersburg, October 30, 1910.

39437/36821/10/44A.

D. 3.30 P.M.

Tel. (No. 298.)

R. 6.30 P.M.

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs has spoken to me further regarding negotiations in Potsdam.

He remarked that the discussion respecting Persian railways would be academic in the sense that there was no financial possibility of building railways in North Persia for years to come.

As regards neutral zone, he would state, if the German negotiators touched on question, that he could not discuss it without consulting His Majesty's Government.

He would not mention England in connection with Russian sphere (though he recognised his obligations to His Majesty's Government in this matter also), because to do so would indispose Germans. He would, however, decline to conclude anything until his return to St. Petersburg. Apart from his demands respecting concessions, he would ask that Germany should agree not to construct any branch of Bagdad Railway connecting with Persian system at a point north of Khanikin. His fear was that he had but little to offer in return for asking Germany to refrain from applying for concessions as she was legally entitled to do. He could offer engagement that Khanikin should form junction with the Persian system, and he was also prepared to agree to German participation (even up to 30 per cent.) in the supply of material for future railways in North Persia. This hardly seemed a sufficient *quid pro quo*. He was aware that Germany had said that she would not seek concessions embarrassing to the two Powers, but he doubted if she would adhere to that attitude.

I suggested that he should remind German Government that Russia and England had exclusive political interests in Persia which had always been recognised. They had publicly warned the Persian Government that they could not admit certain concessions, and *Germany* and other Powers *had practically acquiesced in that principle.*⁽¹⁾

No allusion was made to possibility of Germany asking for Russia's definite consent to Bagdad Railway scheme, but French Ambassador tells me that Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs has intimated to him that he will not commit himself in regard to that matter.

MINUTE

The danger is that Germany will try to get an extension of the Bagdad R[ai]l[wa]y to Bushire—however, things may be clearer after the Potsdam meeting.

A. P.

October 31, 1910.

R. P. M.

A. N.

E. G.

⁽¹⁾ [Marginal note by Mr. A. Parker: "This is scarcely correct. [A. P.]"]

[*ED. NOTE*—Mr. O'Beirne's despatch (No 432), D. October 30, R. November 7, 1910, expanded the telegram given as the immediately preceding document. It added nothing to the telegram except that, in referring to the Russian readiness to give Germany participation in the supply of materials for future railway lines "even to the amount of 30 per cent.," M. Sazonov said "he was aware that His Majesty's Government objected to such participation (as regards the British sphere)" (F.O. 371/1015 40355/36821/10/34A.) Minutes written on this despatch stated that Sir Edward Grey's attitude was "clearly shown" in his despatch to Sir E. Goschen (No 148) of May 31, 1910 (*v. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. VI, pp 490-1, No. 375). Reference was also made to his telegram (No. 175), of April 13, 1910, D 5.50 P.M. (*v. ibid.*, p. 461, No 345), and to a minute by Sir Edward Grey on Mr O'Beirne's private telegram to Sir A. Nicolson of October 19, 1910, in which he said that he "saw no objection to giving Germany a share of material, &c., for railway concessions, if we could get a good arrangement as to Bagdad R[ailwa]y." (F.O. 371/1015. 38190/36821/10/34A.)]

No. 604.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1015.

40359/36821/11/34A.

(No. 436.) Confidential.

Sir,

St. Petersburg, D. November 2, 1910.

R. November 7, 1910.

With reference to my despatch No. 432 of the 30th ultimo,⁽²⁾ I have the honour to state that I called yesterday on Monsieur Iswolsky and had some conversation with him regarding the forthcoming negotiations at Potsdam. His Excellency said, referring to the future railway from the Turco-Persian frontier to Teheran, that it would be difficult for Russia to construct it, because there was no prospect of obtaining kilometric guarantees from the Persian Government, as the Germans had done in Turkey. He had therefore suggested to Monsieur Sazonow that he might negotiate for a kind of Russian option in regard to the line, under which Russia should agree that if she did not construct the railway within a specified number of years Germany would regain her liberty of action in the matter. I may observe that Monsieur Sazonow in discussing the subject with me did not speak of Russia binding herself to construct the railway within any specified time. He defined the obligation which Russia was prepared to undertake as being that "if and when" the railway was constructed by Russia, Khanikin should be the point of junction with the Bagdad railway system.

Monsieur Iswolsky went on to say that he did not believe that Germany had in reality the remotest intention of building any railway in Persia. She had financial difficulties enough with the Bagdad line. Her object was simply to exert "une pression politique." I said that I should like to hear what it was precisely that Germany wished to attain by such pressure. I understood in a general way that, as Monsieur Sazonow had remarked to me lately, Germany aimed at detaching Russia from the western Powers, but what were the exact arrangements to which she wished Russia to consent?

Monsieur Iswolsky replied that as regards Russia's general foreign policy, its lines were definitely fixed and they would not be changed although Germany might try to change them. As regards Persia the German Government had always made it clear to him as Minister of Foreign Affairs that they would be willing to show themselves accommodating, but that they wished to adopt that attitude as the result of an agreement with Russia, and not as the result of an agreement come to between

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King, and as having been seen at Berlin on November 5.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. immediately preceding Ed. note.*]

Russia and Great Britain to which Germany was not a party. It was however not certain, Monsieur Iswolsky added, whether Herr von Kiderlen-Wächter would take the same line as his predecessors, or whether he would prove more exacting.

I have, &c.

HUGH O'BEIRNE.

MINUTE.

See the last sentence: much depends on this probably.

A. P.

Nov[ember] 8, 1910.

R. P. M.

A. N.

E. G.

[*ED. NOTE*—The meeting between the Emperor Nicholas and the German Emperor took place at Potsdam on November 4–5, 1910. M. Sazonov, Herr von Bethmann Hollweg, and Herr von Kiderlen-Waechter were present. The Emperor Nicholas left Potsdam for Darmstadt on the morning of the 6th, and M. Sazonov left for Russia in the evening of the same day after an interview with Herr von Bethmann Hollweg in the afternoon. (Sir E. Goschen's despatch (No. 318), D. November 7, R. November 14, 1910 F.O. 371/907. 41334/40383/10/18.)]

No. 605.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.(¹)

F.O. 371/1015.

40786/36821/10/44A.

Tel. (No. 309.)

St. Petersburg, November 8, 1910.

D. 6 P.M.

R. 8.30 P.M.

Potsdam negotiations.

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs gave me the following information respecting the negotiations touching Persia and the Bagdad Railway:—

Neutral zone in Persia was not referred to.

As regards Russian sphere, the only engagement that the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs took was that the North Persian Railway system would be connected with future Bagdad Railway system at Khanikin. Russia did not undertake to commence railway construction in Persia with[in] any specified time. Germany did not refer to participation of supply of material, but asked that no differential rates be established.

Germany appeared to acquiesce in Russian requirements respecting concessions of a "territorial" character in their sphere.

They also acquiesced in a stipulation made by Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs that if Germany came to terms with Great Britain regarding Bagdad-Gulf section Russia should have right to build the branch from Khanikin to Sadijeh. (I clearly understood his Excellency to make this statement, but will take an early opportunity of verifying it). Germany further agreed not to build any lines touching the Persian frontier north of Khanikin.

Details of the above arrangements are to be negotiated with the German Ambassador at St. Petersburg.

(¹) [This telegram was sent to Berlin (as No. 119).]

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs informed me that German Chancellor had "all but said" that Germany was about to come to terms with England regarding Bagdad-Gulf section, and he had derived the same impression from language of Kiderlen.⁽²⁾

⁽²⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 676, Secret) of November 9, 1910, instructed Mr. O'Beirne to thank M. Isvolski cordially for his communication, which was considered satisfactory. Sir Edward Grey added: "Last paragraph is interesting, as we have had no indication of this sort from German Government lately and no progress has been made either about Bagdad or Persian Railways." This telegram was repeated to Berlin (No. 117) (F O 371/1015. 40736/36821/10/44A.)]

No. 606.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1015.

St. Petersburg, November 9, 1910.

40868/36821/10/38.

D. 3.21 P.M.

Tel. (No. 310.)

R. 4.30 P.M.

In an interview with "Novoe Vremya" Correspondent Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] is reported to have said that question of a change in Russia's general policy was not even indirectly referred to at Potsdam. As regards Persia the neutral zone could be discussed only in presence of a representative of Great Britain.

Germany recognises Russia's special interests in Russian sphere and will not seek concessions involving possession of land. Germany however desires that if Russia builds railways in Northern Persia she should "take into account German interests connected with Bagdad line." Germany denies having any part in present tendency of Turkish policy and will not support Turkey in an attempt to break peace either in Europe or Asia.

MINUTE

Very satisfactory.

A. P.

Nov[ember] 9, 1910.

R. P. M.

L. M.

A. N.

E. G.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Berlin (as No. 119); to Tehran (as No. 332)]

No. 607.

Sir E. Goschen to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1015.

Berlin, November 9, 1910.

40880/36821/10/44A.

D. 5.45 P.M.

Tel. (No. 68.) Confidential.

R. 8.50 P.M.

Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs told me yesterday that his conversation with Russian Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs had been of the most friendly description. He said that nothing had been communicated to the press and that therefore I must disbelieve the accounts given. As a matter of fact, the conversations had been limited to a very general discussion of the political questions of the day. As regards Near East, they have agreed upon maintenance of the *status quo* in Balkans, and of localising as far as possible any quarrels between minor States.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to St. Petersburg (as No. 679); to Tehran (as No. 333); to Constantinople (as No. 331); to Paris by post (as No. 467).]

He had urged the desirability of supporting, for want of a better, the present Ottoman Government and of non-interference in Ottoman internal affairs, but he had pointed out at the same time that if internal troubles should ever render outside interference necessary it would be well that minor States should thoroughly understand that such interference was not their affair, but that of the Great Powers.

His Excellency touched very lightly upon what had passed with regard to Persian affairs. He similarly said that he had told Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs that, as Russia recognised principle of the integrity of Persia and of open door, there was no need for discussion of Persian political affairs, with which Germany had nothing to do.

To my French colleague he said the same thing, only adding that idea so sedulously put about by M. Isvolsky that Germany was behind the proceedings of Turkey on the Persian frontier was absolutely false.

To my French colleague he also said that alliances between France and Russia and Germany and Austria, respectively, were facts which admit of no discussion, and that French Government could be assured that nothing had passed in the recent conversations which could have the slightest effect on these alliances or duties under them; they had been rather directed towards creating an atmosphere which would allow such differences as must exist between every nation to be discussed in a friendlier and more useful manner than had recently been possible.

His Excellency told me that Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs had made an excellent impression upon him. He had found him open and frank, and devoid of personal vanity, a man with whom one could talk freely, and who, moreover, seemed little likely to spring surprises upon Europe as other people had been in the habit of doing.

I hear that German Secretary of State made an equally favourable impression upon Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, and that latter's idea is that a *détente* between the two countries is absolutely necessary, that it will lead to a rapprochement with Austria, and that the whole of Europe will welcome it as a fresh guarantee of peace.

No. 608.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1015.

41950/36821/10/44A.

(No. 445.) Secret.

St. Petersburg, D. November 9, 1910.

Sir,

R. November 18, 1910.

I have the honour to state that at an interview which I had with Monsieur Sazonow yesterday morning he gave me the following information as to what had passed at Potsdam between him and the German Government in reference to Persia and the Bagdad Railway.

His Excellency began by saying that on arriving in Berlin he found that the impression existed at the Russian Embassy that Germany was on the point of coming to terms with Great Britain on the subject of the Gulf section of the Bagdad Railway. With this information to start with, he had opened conversation with the German Chancellor by saying that he supposed it was a foregone conclusion that the principle of the *sectionnement* of the Bagdad Railway would have to be adopted, and that the Bagdad-Gulf section would go to England. Herr von

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe. It was sent to Berlin (Secret) on November 29; to Paris on November 30]

Bethmann-Hollweg had not protested, nor had he expressed dissent from this assumption, but he had appeared to acquiesce in it. The Chancellor had in fact "done everything but say" that Germany was ready to agree to an arrangement such as Monsieur Sazonow had indicated; and Monsieur Sazonow had derived the same impression from the language of Herr von Kiderlen-Wächter. I told His Excellency as to this point that His Majesty's Government had no reason whatever to think that Germany was disposed to make an arrangement acceptable to them with regard to the Bagdad Railway; and that nothing had passed between them and the German Government recently on the subject.

Monsieur Sazonow had, he proceeded to tell me, said to the German Chancellor that if the Gulf section went to England he would readily understand that Russia could not remain empty-handed. She would claim the branch from Sadijeh to Khanikin. In this stipulation the German Chancellor had, Monsieur Sazonow said, acquiesced; and the Germans had further agreed not to build any line in Turkish territory touching the Persian frontier at a point north of Khanikin.

In the negotiations regarding Persia, the neutral zone was not even mentioned by the German statesmen. In any case, Monsieur Sazonow said to me, this was a subject which could only be treated *à trois*, in concert with Great Britain.

As regards the Russian sphere, the German negotiators had made no difficulties as to Russian requirements respecting concessions. Monsieur Sazonow had asked that Germany should agree not to seek for railway or telegraph concessions or generally concessions of a territorial character, and as to this demand the German negotiators had made no objections, and seemed to acquiesce. The only undertaking to which Monsieur Sazonow on his side bound himself was that the Bagdad Railway system, when in the future it reached the Persian frontier, should be connected at Khanikin with the North Persian system. I asked whether Russia had undertaken to commence railway construction in Persia within any specified time, and His Excellency answered in the negative. Germany, he further said, had made no request for participation in the supply of materials for the railways and he had therefore kept what he had to offer in this respect "in his pocket." The Germans had however stipulated that no differential railway rates should be instituted by Russia on lines which she controlled.

A detailed agreement was, Monsieur Sazonow informed me, to be negotiated in St. Petersburg with the German Ambassador.⁽²⁾ He remarked that Germany might then very likely bring forward further demands on certain points but that he proposed to adhere to the position which he had taken up when at Potsdam.

I need hardly say that the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs in the conversations which I had with him before his departure gave me no indication that he intended to make a claim for the Sadijeh-Khanikin branch. The way in which he spoke of the junction of the two railway systems at Khanikin showed I think clearly that at that time he contemplated that railway construction under Russian auspices should begin at the Persian frontier. Monsieur Sazonow may perhaps have had it in his mind to put forward a claim for the Khanikin branch in the way of bargaining, but I do not believe that he had any serious expectation that the claim would be entertained by Germany.

I have, &c.

HUGH O'BEIRNE.

P.S.—From some further conversation which I have had with Monsieur Sazonow since writing this despatch, I find that as regards the stipulation which he made concerning the Khanikin-Sadijeh branch, it might be safer to say, not that the German Chancellor acquiesced, but that he mutely signified acquiescence.

H. O'B.

Nov[ember] 14, 1910.

(2) [*cp. infra*, pp. 574-5, No. 618. *encl*]

MINUTES.

This contains rather more detail than the telegram;⁽³⁾ and the penultimate paragraph is most important—a detailed agreement is in view, as already reported.

A. P.
Nov[ember] 18, 1910.
R. P. M.

I cannot help thinking that Monsieur Sazonow has been precipitate in giving any undertaking as to the junction of the Bagdad Railway and the line to Tehran, at this stage

If the much talked of trans-Persian line takes definite shape (and now that Lord Hardinge is Viceroy the views of the Gov[ernment] of India may be modified), the junction would have been a much more valuable asset for a bargain, and H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] ought to have been consulted.

Perhaps however, the junction of the Khanikin Tehran line with Trans-Persian line may still afford the pretext for a bargain.

L. M.
Nov[ember] 19.
A. N.
E. G.

(³) [*v. supra*, pp. 556-7, No. 605.]

No. 609.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1015.
41951/36821/10/44A.
(No. 446.) Secret.
Sir,

St. Petersburg, D. November 9, 1910.
R. November 18, 1910.

As I have had the honour to inform you in previous despatches⁽²⁾ I saw the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs yesterday on the morning of his return from the Imperial meeting at Potsdam, and he gave me some account of what had passed on that occasion in reference to the Near East. Our conversation on this subject was but short, as His Excellency was much pressed for time.

Monsieur Sazonow showed me clearly that he was extremely gratified by the general way in which his interviews with the German negotiators had passed off. He said that the German Chancellor had made a very favourable impression on him as a well-meaning and straightforward man, and that Herr von Kiderlen-Wächter, though an unpleasant personality, had been with him all honey. He had been prepared to return rudeness for rudeness in his intercourse with that gentleman, but had had no occasion to do so.

The conversation with the German negotiators had, so far as European politics were concerned, been chiefly about Austria, and Germany's attitude had been quite remarkably satisfactory. The German Chancellor had stated to him that if Austria-Hungary departed from the principles laid down by Russia in the exchange of views which took place with Vienna last winter (maintenance of the *status quo*, pacific development of the Balkan States, &c.), Germany would give the Dual Monarchy "neither material nor moral support." Monsieur Sazonow told me that knowing Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg not to be a diplomatist he had been almost inclined to ask him whether he realised the effect of what he was saying. He had instead said to him that he took note ("que je prenais acte") of his words, and he had enquired whether the Chancellor had made the same statement to the Emperor Nicholas. Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg replied that he had not had an opportunity of doing so, and Monsieur Sazonow then said that he would himself inform the Tsar.

(¹) [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King. It was sent, very secret, to Paris, on November 28; to Berlin (as No. 317), and to Vienna (as No. 98) on November 29.]

(²) [Mr. O'Beirne's despatch (No. 444), D. November 8, R. November 18, 1910, is not reproduced. It reported a conversation with M. Sazonov on the subject of the proposed issue of a 5 per cent. loan by the Imperial Bank of Persia. (F.O. 371/965. 41949/38079/10/34A.) *cp. infra*, p. 745, No. 747. For his despatch (No. 445) *v. immediately preceding document*.]

The German Chancellor had, Monsieur Sazonow went on to tell me, developed his statement by saying that Germany was not bound by treaty ("Wir sind nicht vertragsmässig verpflichtet") to go further in support of the Dual Monarchy than she had done already, and that if Austria-Hungary had any ideas of expansion in the Balkan peninsula it was not to Germany's interest that she should carry them out. I asked whether Herr von Kiderlen-Wächter had expressed himself in the same general sense as the Chancellor, and Monsieur Sazonow replied in the affirmative.

I asked whether the German Chancellor had appeared to believe that Austria-Hungary really entertained any ideas of expansion. Monsieur Sazonow said no. Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg had said to him that he believed that Count Aehrenthal intended to adhere to the *status quo*. His reason for so believing was that the Emperor Franz Joseph had given a most solemn and categorical assurance to that effect (to Herr von Bethmann himself, as I understood, but possibly to the German Emperor). What Austria desired was economic expansion in the Balkan peninsula by the acquisition of new markets. The German Chancellor had further stated in the same connexion to the Russian Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs that Germany would be happy at any time to act as an intermediary between Russia and Austria-Hungary with a view to smoothing over difficulties between them.

I was unable to report to you sooner the substance of the communication made to me by Monsieur Sazonow because His Excellency, who is firmly convinced that cyphers do not ensure secrecy, exacted a promise from me that I would not telegraph to you on the subject.

I have, &c.

HUGH O'BEIRNE.

MINUTE.

This is a most interesting despatch. We have now a peculiar situation. Vienna trying to free herself from Berlin dictation—and Berlin declaring that if Vienna departs from the Russian programme quâ Balkans Austria will not receive material or moral support from Germany. A very different situation from that of a few months ago—with the "gleaming armour" episode. Moreover Berlin wishes to be the intermediary between Vienna and St. Petersburg, and Vienna desires to approach St. Petersburg via Paris or London. The complexities are apparent. A Russian deputy of distinction and weight told me this morning that a real rapprochement or identity of aim between Russia and Austria quâ Balkans was impossible, as the objects of each country were diametrically opposed. Subsequent developments of the respective attitudes of Berlin and Vienna will be interesting to watch. To my mind one thing is clear and that is that both Austria and Germany realize that Russia is rapidly recuperating and is worth winning.

A. N.
E. G.

No. 610.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1015.

41953/36821/10/44A.

(No. 452.) Secret.

Sir,

St. Petersburg, D. November 13, 1910.

R. November 13, 1910.

In conversations which I have had with the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs subsequent to that reported in my despatch No. 446 of the 9th instant⁽²⁾ Monsieur Sazonow confirmed the accuracy of the report published by the "Novoe Vremya" of his interview with a representative of that paper on the 8th instant.⁽³⁾ I said to

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King. It was sent to Paris; to Berlin (as No. 318), and to Vienna (as No. 99), "very secret," on November 29.]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

⁽³⁾ [Mr. O'Beirne's despatch (No. 447), D. November 9, R. November 14, 1910, reported this interview. (F.O. 371/1015. 41399/36821/10/38.) *cp. also supra*, p. 557, No. 606.]

The German Chancellor had, Monsieur Sazonow went on to tell me, developed his statement by saying that Germany was not bound by treaty ("Wir sind nicht vertragsmässig verpflichtet") to go further in support of the Dual Monarchy than she had done already, and that if Austria-Hungary had any ideas of expansion in the Balkan peninsula it was not to Germany's interest that she should carry them out. I asked whether Herr von Kiderlen-Wächter had expressed himself in the same general sense as the Chancellor, and Monsieur Sazonow replied in the affirmative.

I asked whether the German Chancellor had appeared to believe that Austria-Hungary really entertained any ideas of expansion. Monsieur Sazonow said no. Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg had said to him that he believed that Count Aehrenthal intended to adhere to the *status quo*. His reason for so believing was that the Emperor Franz Joseph had given a most solemn and categorical assurance to that effect (to Herr von Bethmann himself, as I understood, but possibly to the German Emperor). What Austria desired was economic expansion in the Balkan peninsula by the acquisition of new markets. The German Chancellor had further stated in the same connexion to the Russian Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs that Germany would be happy at any time to act as an intermediary between Russia and Austria-Hungary with a view to smoothing over difficulties between them.

I was unable to report to you sooner the substance of the communication made to me by Monsieur Sazonow because His Excellency, who is firmly convinced that cyphers do not ensure secrecy, exacted a promise from me that I would not telegraph to you on the subject.

I have, &c.

HUGH O'BEIRNE.

MINUTE.

This is a most interesting despatch. We have now a peculiar situation. Vienna trying to free herself from Berlin dictation—and Berlin declaring that if Vienna departs from the Russian programme quâ Balkans Austria will not receive material or moral support from Germany. A very different situation from that of a few months ago—with the "gleaming armour" episode. Moreover Berlin wishes to be the intermediary between Vienna and St. Petersburg, and Vienna desires to approach St. Petersburg via Paris or London. The complexities are apparent. A Russian deputy of distinction and weight told me this morning that a real rapprochement or identity of aim between Russia and Austria quâ Balkans was impossible, as the objects of each country were diametrically opposed. Subsequent developments of the respective attitudes of Berlin and Vienna will be interesting to watch. To my mind one thing is clear and that is that both Austria and Germany realize that Russia is rapidly recuperating and is worth winning.

A. N.
E. G.

No. 610.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1015.

41953/36821/10/44A.

(No. 452.) Secret.

Sir,

St. Petersburg, D. November 18, 1910.

R. November 18, 1910.

In conversations which I have had with the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs subsequent to that reported in my despatch No. 446 of the 9th instant⁽²⁾ Monsieur Sazonow confirmed the accuracy of the report published by the "Novoe Vremya" of his interview with a representative of that paper on the 8th instant.⁽³⁾ I said to

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King. It was sent to Paris; to Berlin (as No. 318), and to Vienna (as No. 99), "very secret," on November 29.]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

⁽³⁾ [Mr. O'Beirne's despatch (No. 447), D. November 9, R. November 14, 1910, reported this interview. (F.O. 371/1015. 41399/36821/10/38.) cp. also *supra*, p. 557, No. 606.]

His Excellency yesterday that I supposed he had given the interview with the object of pinning Germany down to the concessions made by her at Potsdam. Monsieur Sazonow replied in the affirmative, adding a remark to the effect that with German negotiators one never quite knew where one was. I observed that it was a little difficult to accept the assurances made to him at Potsdam as to Germany never having encouraged Turkey in her aggressive action in Persian territory and in the direction of the Russian frontier. Monsieur Sazonow said, You do not suppose that I am sufficiently *naïf* to believe in them. But he added that these were things of the past, and he gave me to understand that he did attach importance to the German assurances on this point so far as they concerned the future. He said that in his interview with the "Novoe Vremya" correspondent he had laid stress on these assurances in order to convey a warning to the Turks.

I find that the French Ambassador's view of what passed at Potsdam is that it was in the nature of an exchange of polite phrases, rather than of a business conversation. On the German side the main anxiety was to establish cordial relations with Monsieur Sazonow, such as had latterly ceased to exist with Monsieur Iswolsky. The German negotiators therefore would say nothing but what was pleasant, and they were careful to avoid returning a direct refusal to any desideratum that Monsieur Sazonow might express. But when it came to business Monsieur Louis was of the opinion that the German Government would adopt a very different tone.

Monsieur Louis may very possibly prove to be right, but I think it is clear that Monsieur Sazonow himself takes a somewhat different view of the Potsdam negotiations. The Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs certainly considers that he has obtained Germany's acquiescence, in principle, in the demands which he put forward regarding Persia and the Bagdad Railway. Retaining as he does a considerable amount of scepticism in regard to the value of verbal assurances from Germany he did his best, by the publication of the "Novoe Vremya" interview, to pin the German Government down to the concessions made at Potsdam. He is indeed quite prepared to find, when the negotiation of the detailed arrangement commences, that Germany may bring forward some additional demands on her side. Still he expects the German Government to adhere, as regards the main points, to the attitude which they took up at Potsdam; and should they substantially modify that attitude he will consider that he was deceived, and the improvement in Russo-German relations brought about by the Potsdam meeting will hardly be maintained.

As regards Near Eastern politics, Monsieur Sazonow undoubtedly attaches the greatest importance to the singularly emphatic and unreserved, not to say unguarded, statements made to him by the German Chancellor as to the limitations which there are to Germany's support of the Dual Monarchy. He believes these statements to have been sincere, and, that being so it is evident that they have gone far to relieve his mind of apprehensions from the side of Austria, and that he feels in a better position to prosecute the aims of Russia's present policy in the Balkans. Monsieur Sazonow also sets considerable store, as he gave me to understand, by the German assurances in reference to Turkey, which should he thinks act as a wholesome check on the aggressive disposition of the Young Turks.

In a general way the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs clearly considers that a new phase has been opened in Russo-German relations, and probably he also anticipates, though he has scarcely spoken to me on that point, that improved relations with Germany will lead to less strained relations with Austria. I need hardly say however that he does not appear to regard such a *détente* as affecting in the remotest way the existing relations of Russia with Great Britain and France.

I have, &c.

HUGH O'BEIRNE.

No. 611.

Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1015.

41875/36821/10/44A.

Tel. (No. 101.) Confidential.

Paris, November 16, 1910.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs has received information from Berlin and St. Petersburg respecting M. Sazonow's interviews at Potsdam, which he will communicate to me, and discuss, if I be authorised to give him any information thereon which may be in your possession. It displeases M. Pichon very much that M. Sazonow should have made his début as Minister for Foreign Affairs at Berlin instead of at Paris and London. M. Louis suggested that he should be instructed to thank M. Sazonow for communicating to him what passed at Potsdam, but M. Pichon has not accepted this suggestion.

His Excellency says that he has noticed lately from the language of the Russian chargé d'affaires here that Russia has such great fear of Germany that she is disposed to make concessions to the German Government without previously consulting France or England. I am sending to you to-day by post in my despatch No. 480⁽²⁾ a copy of an article in the "Figaro" of the 11th instant respecting the Potsdam interview. M. Pichon spoke to me about this article, and declared that M. Sazonow himself had dictated it.

MINUTE.

I think we might well authorise Sir F. Bertie to communicate conf[idential]ly what we know⁽³⁾: unless M. Pichon has more disturbing information his attitude would seem rather unreasonable.

A. P.
Nov[ember] 12, 1910.
R. P. M.
L. M.
E. G.

⁽¹⁾ [The text given above is taken from the *Confidential Print*, as the original decypher cannot be traced.]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately succeeding document.]

⁽³⁾ [A telegram (No. 398) was sent to this effect on November 17, 1910, D. 6 P.M. (F.O. 371/1015. 41875/36821/10/44A). It was repeated to St. Petersburg (No 690).]

No. 612.

Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 371/1015.

41819/36821/10/44A.

(No. 480.)

Paris, D. November 16, 1910.

Sir,

R. November 17, 1910.

I have the honour to transmit to you, extracted from the "Figaro" of the 11th instant, copy of a telegraphic report from the correspondent of that journal at St. Petersburg, giving an account of an interview which he had with a high personage at the Russian Ministry for Foreign Affairs on the subject of the Potsdam meeting.

The personage in question maintains that that meeting has happily served to clear the air of the electricity with which it was charged, in so far as regards Russo-German relations. An assurance had been given to Germany that Russia had no desire to infringe on the autonomy of Persia. No objection was felt by Russia to the construction of the Bagdad Railway. After some remarks on the situation in

the Near East, the interview came to an end. M. René Marchand observes that the Potsdam meeting must be held to mark the end of the period of cold relations between Russia and Germany and as the sign of a renewal of good relations between the two countries. M. Pichon informed me to-day that the interview in question was dictated by M. Sazonow himself.

I have, &c.

FRANCIS BERTIE.

Enclosure in No. 612.

Extract from the "Figaro" of November 11, 1910.

Après Potsdam: La Politique de la Russie.

(Par dépêche de notre correspondant particulier.)

Saint-Pétersbourg, 10 Novembre.

J'ai pu avoir au ministère des affaires étrangères un entretien auquel la personnalité de mon interlocuteur donne une haute importance.

— Est-il exact, lui ai-je demandé, que l'entrevue de Potsdam soit un premier pas vers un changement d'orientation de la politique russe?

— Absolument non. Notre politique extérieure, dans son état actuel, répond exactement à nos intérêts et ne saurait donc subir sur aucun point aucune modification. Sa base immuable demeure l'alliance avec la France. Quant à l'entente avec l'Angleterre, elle n'est sans doute que partielle et concerne seulement l'Orient, mais elle s'est répercutée heureusement sur les rapports mondiaux entre les deux pays. Il est déjà surabondamment démontré aujourd'hui que M. Isvolsky a fait au point de vue russe d'excellente besogne quand il a conclu en 1907 cette entente après une longue période de rivalités et de malentendus entre la Russie et l'Angleterre.⁽¹⁾ Dites que la politique actuelle est la continuation de la politique suivie jusqu'à ce jour par la Russie, politique, je le répète, seule conforme à ses intérêts et répondant seule à ses besoins.

— Alors quelle est la portée de l'entrevue de Potsdam?

— D'avoir heureusement dissipé, par une conversation générale, l'atmosphère encore chargée d'électricité qui, depuis les derniers événements que vous savez, enveloppait pour ainsi dire toujours les relations russo-allemandes.

— Ainsi la conversation de Potsdam a été une conversation générale qui n'a porté sur aucun fait précis particulier?

— D'abord et avant tout, on s'est entretenu des questions commerciales, comme il est naturel, si vous songez à l'importance des liens commerciaux qui unissent la Russie et l'Allemagne dont les marchés sont en rapports étroits.

— Mais, dans le domaine politique, n'a-t-il été rien dit?

— On a parlé de la Perse. Les hommes d'Etat allemands et l'Empereur lui-même ont été amenés à reconnaître que l'Allemagne a une situation des plus favorables, mais qu'elle avait besoin de débouchés, sa production se trouvant limitée à un champ d'exportation très restreint par suite de l'insuffisance de son empire colonial. Nous avons nettement défini notre politique persane, telle que vous la connaissez, et notamment avons indiqué la signification exacte de l'entretien par nous de garnisons dans ce pays dans un but essentiellement commercial, c'est-à-dire pour protéger les routes des caravanes contre les tentatives des brigands tant que la Perse serait en état d'anarchie; en outre, en réponse à une question qui nous était adressée, nous avons donné l'assurance à l'Allemagne que nous n'avions aucune intention de fermer jamais la Perse à son commerce en faisant de ce pays un marché exclusivement russe et anglais, non certes que cette solution ne nous eût été très agréable à

⁽¹⁾ [v. Gooch & Temperley. Vol. IV, pp. 618-20, App. I.]

envisager, mais parce que nous n'avons aucun droit sur la Perse qui est un État autonome et à l'autonomie duquel, fidèles à notre politique essentiellement pacifique et ennemie de toute tentative de conquête, nous n'avons aucune intention de porter atteinte.

— A-t-il été parlé du chemin de fer de Bagdad?

— Les hommes d'État allemands ont paru s'y intéresser vivement. De notre côté nous n'avons aucune objection à faire à cette entreprise.

— A-t-on abordé la question balkanique?

— Oui, mais très sommairement pour indiquer de part et d'autre que la politique était inspirée uniquement par le désir de maintenir rigoureusement le *statu quo*.

— N'avez-vous pas été cependant amenés, en raison des récents événements, à envisager l'attitude de la Turquie?

— On n'a pas spécialement parlé de la Turquie, mais les hommes d'État allemands, précisant leur déclaration générale qu'ils prenaient pour ligne de conduite le maintien absolu du *statu quo*, condition essentielle de la paix mondiale, ont ajouté que, pas plus dans les Balkans qu'ailleurs, ils n'avaient l'intention de soutenir une influence étrangère au détriment d'une autre influence étrangère. Nous en avons pris acte.

— N'a-t-il pas été question de la Crète? Notamment, n'a-t-on pas envisagé, en vue d'une solution définitive à donner au problème crétois, la réunion d'une conférence internationale, à laquelle prendraient part, outre les Puissances protectrices, l'Allemagne et l'Autriche?

— Il n'a été en aucune façon et à aucun moment parlé de la Crète.

— Et de l'Extrême-Orient?

— Nous n'en avons pas parlé davantage.

— Permettez-moi maintenant de vous demander, à propos de la situation présente dans les Balkans, comment serait envisagée l'attitude de la Turquie au cas où elle croirait devoir prendre dans les Balkans fait et cause pour une influence au détriment des autres?

— Je n'ai pas à répondre à une semblable question dictée par une simple hypothèse. Je puis dire seulement que nous avons donné à la Jeune-Turquie, en consentant un important sacrifice pécuniaire pour régler son différend avec la Bulgarie, une preuve toute particulière de notre fervent désir de maintenir le *statu quo* balkanique et de nos intentions, non seulement pacifiques, mais sympathiques à son égard. Il convient donc aujourd'hui de faire crédit à la Jeune-Turquie et d'attendre ses actes qui, nous l'espérons, seront en harmonie avec les nôtres. Mais il est certain que nous ne pourrions accepter que la Turquie aille à l'encontre des intérêts de la Russie, non plus que des intérêts des États slaves. Le respect sincère et absolu de l'intégrité de ces États est d'ailleurs la condition essentielle du maintien du *statu quo*.

Telles sont, exactement reproduites, les déclarations que j'ai recueillies et que vous pouvez considérer, d'après mes informations, comme l'expression de la politique du nouveau ministre. Elles confirment d'ailleurs pleinement l'impression que je m'étais faite à la suite de conversations dans les milieux diplomatiques sur l'entrevue de Potsdam. Il faut considérer cette entrevue, à la suite d'une période de froid marqué entre la Russie et l'Allemagne, comme un indice heureux de reprise de bonnes relations.

RENÉ MARCHAND.

Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 871/1016.

42807/36821/10/44A.

(No. 422.) Confidential.

Sir,

Paris, D. November 23, 1910.

R. November 25, 1910.

With a view of acting on the authority given in your telegram No. 398 of the 17th instant,⁽²⁾ I called on Monsieur Pichon by appointment on the 20th instant and communicated to His Excellency the following information respecting the interviews at Potsdam between the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs and the German Chancellor and M. de Kiderlen-Wächter.

Monsieur Sazonoff, on his return to St. Petersburg, had told His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires there that, in the course of negotiations respecting Persia and the Bagdad Railway, the question of a neutral zone in Persia was not referred to. The only engagement as regards the Russian sphere which Monsieur Sazonoff had entered into was that the North Persian Railway system would be connected at Khanikin with the future Bagdad Railway system. No undertaking had been entered into by Russia as to beginning railway construction in Persia within any specified time. No reference had been made by the German Government as to a participation in the supply of material, but they had asked that no differential rates should be established. As regards concessions of a territorial nature in the Russian sphere, the German Government had appeared to acquiesce, as also in a stipulation made by Monsieur Sazonoff that, if an arrangement were reached by Germany with England respecting the Bagdad-Gulf section, the Russian Government should have the right to build the branch from Khanikin to Sadijeh. I here informed Monsieur Pichon that His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at St. Petersburg had stated that, as regards this latter portion of his information, he clearly understood Monsieur Sazonoff to express himself in the terms as given above, but that he would take an early opportunity of verifying it.⁽³⁾

The German Government had further agreed that Germany would build no lines which would touch the Persian frontier to the north of Khanikin.

Further negotiations to the above arrangements were to be carried on through the German Ambassador at St. Petersburg.

Monsieur Sazonoff had also stated that he had derived the impression both from the German Chancellor and from Monsieur de Kiderlen-Wächter that Germany was about to come to terms with Great Britain respecting the Bagdad-Gulf section of the Railway.

His Majesty's Ambassador at Berlin had been told by the German Foreign Secretary that his conversations with Monsieur Sazonoff had been of the most friendly description. He had told Sir Edward Goschen that nothing had been communicated to the Press, and that therefore the accounts given were not to be relied on. The conversations had been limited to a very general discussion of the political questions of the day. As regards the Near East, Germany and Russia had agreed upon the maintenance of the *status quo* in the Balkans, and of localizing as far as possible any quarrels between the Minor States. Monsieur de Kiderlen-Wächter had urged the desirability of supporting, for want of a better, the present Ottoman Government, and of non-interference in Ottoman internal affairs, but he had pointed out that if internal troubles should ever render outside interference necessary, it would be well that the Minor States should thoroughly understand that such interference was not their affair, but that of the Great Powers.

The German Foreign Secretary had touched very lightly in his conversation with Sir Edward Goschen on what had passed with regard to Persian affairs. He

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp supra*, p. 563, No. 611, *min.*, and *note* ⁽³⁾.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, pp 556-7, No. 605; pp. 558-9, No 608]

had similarly said that he had told Monsieur Sazonoff that, as Russia recognised the principle of the integrity of Persia and of the open door, there was no need for the discussion of Persian political affairs, with which Germany had no concern.

Monsieur de Kiderlen-Wächter had told Sir Edward Goschen that Monsieur Sazonoff had made an excellent impression upon him. He had found him open and frank and devoid of personal vanity, a man with whom one could talk freely, and who, moreover, seemed little likely to spring surprises on Europe as other people had been in the habit of doing.

Sir Edward Goschen had heard that the German Secretary of State made an equally favourable impression on the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs and that the latter's idea was that a "détente" between their two countries was absolutely necessary, that it would lead to a "rapprochement" with Austria and that the whole of Europe would welcome it as a fresh guarantee of peace.

According to an Aide-Mémoire given to me to-day by Monsieur Pichon, the following information has reached the French Government through the French Representatives at St. Petersburg and Berlin as to the Potsdam interviews.

On Monsieur Sazonoff's return to St. Petersburg, he told Monsieur Georges Louis that, at the Potsdam interviews, it had at once been accepted that the existence of the respective alliances and ententes was an established principle, but that Germany and Russia, in spite of their diverse engagements, might seek a settlement of differences arising between them. Monsieur Sazonoff then complained of the encouragement given by Germany to Panislamism, which was a subject of disquietude to the Russian Government on account of the great number of Mussulman Russian Subjects. The Emperor William and his Ministers declared that they did not favour the panislamic movement, and that all they desired was a strong Turkey. As regards Persia, no question was raised as to the British zone but only as to the Russian one, and the conditions had been examined in which, as regards the latter, an entente between the two Powers could be realized. The conditions which the German Ambassador at St. Petersburg is to determine with Monsieur Sazonoff would be on the following bases:—

Germany would renounce all political advantages in Persia, but would obtain commercial equality; Russia would consent to the junction at Khanikin of the future Bagdad line and the future Persian line. There would be no other branch line to the north from the Bagdad line towards Persia; and if, in the question of the Bagdad Railway, the system of attributing sections to different Powers were reverted to, Russia would have the right to the Sadije-Khanikin branch; in the meantime, she entirely reserved her assent to the 4 per cent. increase of the Turkish Customs Dues. As regards Turkey in Europe, the German Ministers declared that, if the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy gave evidence of designs of territorial expansion there, the German Government would not second such a policy.

At Berlin, Monsieur de Kiderlen told Monsieur Jules Cambon that, owing to want of time, it had not been possible to go into questions in detail and there had only been a general exchange of views. As to the Balkan Peninsula, it had been agreed that it was to the interest of the two Powers that the *status quo* should be maintained as long as possible, and to support the present Government in Turkey, or if it should fall, any Government sufficiently strong to restrain the small Balkan States. Also that, in the event of the *status quo* being threatened by internal disorders, it was the business of Europe and not of those small States to bring about and direct a settlement ("liquidation"). Monsieur de Kiderlen said that Austria-Hungary was equally attached to the *status quo* and did not harbour any aggressive intentions. Russia, he observed, had no reason to be astonished at Germany having in the past given Austria-Hungary her support, or at her being resolved to give it again seeing that the alliance between them was, like the Franco-Russian Alliance, an established fact which was outside discussion. As regards Persia, Monsieur de

Kiderlen denied that his Government encouraged the Turks in their ideas of invasion, and intimated that he gave advice in an opposite sense at Constantinople (a statement which, Monsieur Pichon observed, appeared inaccurate). Germany claimed the "open door" in Persia, and the principle of the junction of the Bagdad line with the future Persian railway system in the Russian sphere of influence was accepted. On the other hand, Germany seems to have undertaken to help Russia in preventing the construction in Turkish territory of lines leading from the Black Sea to Persia.

I have, &c.

FRANCIS BERTIE.

MINUTES

M. Pichon's information corresponds pretty closely with ours. His memorandum includes the statement as to the limitation of German support to Austria—and also a statement that Germany will help in preventing the construction of lines from the Black Sea to Persia through Turkish territory.

R C L.
25.11.
R. P M

Tel[egraph] to Sir F Bertie⁽¹⁾

A despatch will be sent to you by next bag containing further information respecting attitude of Germany in event of territorial expansion on part of Austria in Balkans.

You may mention this to M. Pichon.

L. M

It might be noted that M. Kiderlen (p. 5)⁽⁵⁾ stated that Germany was resolved to give Austria Hungary her support. This statement, if taken unconditionally, hardly agrees with what the Chancellor said to M Sazanow. It is odd that M. Sazanow did not mention to us that Germany would support Russia in preventing the construction of lines from the Black Sea through Turkish territory to Persia. This would be a very useful undertaking to Russia

A. N.
E. G.

⁽⁴⁾ [This telegram (No. 401) was despatched on November 26, D. 1 p.m. (F O. 371/1016. 42807/36821/10/44A.)]

⁽⁵⁾ [i.e., the final paragraph of the despatch.]

No. 614.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/951.

43414/2901/10/44A.

(No. 461.) Confidential.

Sir,

St. Petersburg, D. November 24, 1910.

R. November 29, 1910.

I received a few days ago a letter from Monsieur Sazonow enclosing a memorandum entitled "Russian and German railway interests in Persia," and stating that he would like to know what I thought of it. It seems unnecessary to trouble you with a full translation of this memorandum which is of considerable length, but of which the important parts can be resumed in a few words. It is evidently written by a person interested in the trans-Persian railway scheme who is not aware of the details of what passed at Potsdam, and it is directed towards showing the necessity of proceeding with the scheme before further progress has been made with the Bagdad line. It deals with the question in its relation (1) to the transit trade from Europe to India, and (2) to the north Persian market.

The writer assumes that the construction of the Bagdad Railway as far as Bagdad itself is a matter of some years only, and observes that the German Company,

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to Lord Crewe.]

by its concession has the right of building various branches to the Persian frontier of which the most important is the branch from Sadijeh to Khanikin. The Germans realise the immense difficulties of carrying their railway from the point at which it will touch the Persian Gulf forward along the Persian coast towards India. It is natural therefore that they should entertain the project of prolonging it, *viâ* Khanikin, either to Teheran and thence to the Baluchistan frontier, or else as has been recommended by Dr. Gwinner himself to Ispahan and onwards. Of these two routes the latter is materially shorter, but it also presents greater physical difficulties. Both routes are so far longer than the proposed trans-Persian line *viâ* Baku that the transit trade to India would necessarily be monopolised by the latter. The writer argues however that if the German line reaches Bagdad before the Baku-Teheran line is built, the Germans will prolong their line across Persia *viâ* Khanikin; whereas they will have little inducement to do so if they find the shorter transit route already in being.

As regards the north Persian market the author of the memorandum points out that when the German railway reaches Khanikin the present system of protecting Russian industry by transit dues on European goods coming through Batoum and the Caucasus will cease to be efficacious. For the construction of a branch railway from Adana on the Bagdad Railway to Mersina will establish through railway communication from the Mediterranean to the Persian frontier, and European goods will follow that route instead of arriving through the Caucasus. Therefore, the writer concludes, Russia must resign herself to the prospect of increasing competition from European goods in the north Persian market. Her only resource is so far as possible to strengthen her hold on the market beforehand, and for that purpose she should build the Baku-Teheran line as soon as possible.

As you will observe, the memorandum is written throughout on the assumption that the extension of the Bagdad Railway to the Persian frontier (if not beyond it) will be carried out by Germany, and the question is treated as one simply of competition between the future Russian and the future German lines. The matter presents a somewhat different aspect on the supposition that Russia makes good her claim to the Sadijeh-Khanikan branch and herself constructs the extension of that branch to Teheran. I said to Monsieur Sazonow, when discussing the subject with him on the 22nd instant, that it occurred to me that as soon, at any rate, as the German railway reached Bagdad Germany would expect Russia to commence the construction of the branch from Sadijeh, and that she would object to the construction of that branch being indefinitely delayed while the line from Baku to Teheran was built. Russia might thus find herself in the position of having simultaneously to build the two lines, which were mutually competitive.

Monsieur Sazonow replied that Germany might dislike the idea of priority being given to the Baku-Teheran line, but that she could do nothing to prevent it because Russia had not bound herself (nor would she do so) to commence the construction of the line from Sadijeh within any specified time. Besides the construction of that line was necessarily a long way off, whereas the Baku-Teheran line might be built in a very short time. He was informed that the whole trans-Persian line *viâ* Teheran could be completed in two years.

Monsieur Sazonow thus seems to contemplate the possibility of Russia's commencing railway construction in north Persia in the immediate future, and no doubt if his anticipations are realised the question of priority between the two competing lines could in practice hardly arise. It seems clear however that if Russia should remain inactive until the German railway approaches Bagdad, Germany would have good grounds to ask that the extension of the line to the Persian frontier, and beyond, should be taken in hand at the least simultaneously with the construction of the projected line from Baku.

Monsieur Sazonow made an observation on another point, which may be of importance. The promoters of the trans-Persian scheme now he said proposed that the railway should run from Teheran southwards to Ispahan and thence to Yezd and

Kerman. This he said would make it comparatively easy for the extension of the German line to intersect the trans-Persian line at Ispahan. He considered it preferable therefore that the trans-Persian line should take a south-easterly direction from Teheran towards Kerman even though it would then traverse the desert. I may mention that Monsieur Sazonow speaks very confidently of the whole scheme, although he is aware, as reported in my despatch No. 380 of September 17 last,⁽²⁾ that it may meet with considerable opposition from the British side.

I have, &c.

HUGH O'BEIRNE.

MINUTES.

M Sazonow's suggestion in the last para[graph] to build the line due S.E. from Teheran to Yezd and Kerman, thus avoiding all the trade routes to Ispahan, shows how anxious he is to avoid a junction of the railway with Kerman-Bagdad Line⁽³⁾

But he is still in a first enthusiasm for his railway and has not yet realized its difficulties. It is hardly possible yet to take his observations very seriously

R C L
29/11
R P M.
A. N
E. G.

⁽²⁾ [Mr. O'Beirne's despatch (No. 380), D. September 17, R. September 26, 1910, reported a conversation with M. Sazonov in which he referred to the Russian and French attempt to secure a concession for the Samsun-Sivas railway.

"Monsieur Sazonow remarked to me that the Samsun-Sivas railway had a certain importance but it was as nothing compared to that of a trans-Persian line which would connect the Russian and the British Indian systems. That, he said, was the real counter-move to make to the Bagdad Railway scheme, but he feared that Anglo-Indian opinion was not yet ripe for it. He was far from underrating the value of the Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1907. That was 'a great thing' accomplished, but His Excellency gave me to understand that it would, in his opinion, never yield the full value of which it was capable until it was completed by the adoption of the trans-Persian railway scheme, which would he said reduce the Bagdad line to a position of entire insignificance" (F.O. 371/901 34662/2901/10/44A.)]

⁽³⁾ [Marginal note by Mr. Maxwell: "He can only postpone the evil day [R. P. M.]"]

No. 615.

Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 371/1016.

43813/36821/10/44A.

(No. 452.) Secret.

Sir,

Paris, D. December 2, 1910.

R. December 3, 1910.

I had an opportunity yesterday of carrying out the instructions contained in your despatch No. 495, Very Secret, of the 28th ultimo,⁽¹⁾ in regard to the Potsdam interviews. M. Pichon told me that he would communicate to me any further information that reached him respecting them. He had, he said, just had some conversation on the subject with M. Nekludoff, the Russian Chargé d'Affaires. His Excellency had expressed to him surprise and regret at M. Sazonow having embarked

⁽¹⁾ [Unsigned marginal note: "transmitting Mr. O'Beirne's 446 and 452 for communication to M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs]." v. *supra*, pp. 560-2, Nos. 609-10. Sir Edward Grey's despatch (No. 495) informed Sir F. Bertie that he would have been instructed to communicate these despatches earlier had not M. Sazonov asked that the information contained in them should not be given to M. Pichon until he himself had informed the French Ambassador at St. Petersburg. (F.O. 371/1016. 42806/36821/10/44A.)]

on negotiations with the German Government regarding the Bagdad Railway without previous consultation with the French Government. It had been agreed that negotiations on that question should be between the four Governments concerned and M. Sazonow had treated the matter with the German Government only. M. Pichon considered that it would have been more in accordance with the relations between Russia, France and England if M. Sazonow had made visits to Paris and London to consult the French and British Governments before committing himself in negotiations at Berlin. M. Nekludoff, though personally regretting that M. Sazonow had found himself under the necessity of negotiating with the German Government without previous consultation with the French and British Governments, contended that only a subsidiary matter connected with the Bagdad Railway had been discussed, viz. its connection with Khanikin, and questions concerning the Russian sphere of interest in Persia. M. Pichon observed to M. Nekludoff that he quite appreciated the desire of M. Sazonow to improve the relations between Russia and Germany and he accepted the assurances given that the Potsdam interviews had in no way altered the relations of Russia towards France and England; nevertheless he regretted that M. Sazonow had entered on the work of his office by separate negotiations at Berlin.

I have, &c.

FRANCIS BERTIE.

No. 616.

Sir F. Bertie to Sir A. Nicolson.

F.O. 371/1015.

41950/36821/10/44A.

Private and Confidential.

My Dear Nicolson,

Paris, December 5, 1910.

O'Beirne's despatch No. 445 secret of Nov[ember] 9⁽¹⁾ copy of which reached me yesterday convinces me that Sazonow has been roulé by the Bethmann Hollweg-Kiderlen-Wächter combination as was Isvolski by Årenthall.

Sazonow was led to believe that we were negotiating apart from Russia with the German Gov[ernmen]t regarding the Bagdad Railway and thought that he would do a bit on his own account. He did not ask for a yea or nay. He interpreted expression of countenance and silence according to his wishes. He has certainly succeeded in making the French suspicious not Louis so much as Pichon. The latter thinks him well intentioned, but wanting in discernment. Of course he ought to have listened to what the Germans said and stated that he must take time to reflect and then have communicated with the French and British Governments before giving any but general assurances.

Yours ever,

FRANCIS BERTIE.

(1) [*v. supra*, pp. 558-9, No. 608.]

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1016.
44999/36821/10/44A.
(No. 482.)

St. Petersburg, D. December 9, 1910.

Sir,

R. December 13, 1910.

I paid my first official visit to the Minister for Foreign Affairs this afternoon and endeavoured to impress upon His Excellency how much His Majesty's Government had at heart the maintenance of the closest possible understanding with the Russian Government. I had, I said, been charged by you to deliver many friendly messages to His Excellency and to assure him of the pleasure which it afforded you to work with him for the furtherance of our respective interests, which were now happily almost identic. Monsieur Sazonow begged me to convey to you his sincere thanks and to say that he warmly reciprocated your desire for a frank and cordial collaboration on the part of the two Governments.

I then proceeded to say that His Majesty's Government had greatly appreciated the mark of confidence which he had given them in communicating to them the substance of his conversations with the German Chancellor and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. They had been somewhat surprised, however, to learn that the German Government was on the point of concluding an agreement with them with regard to the Gulf section of the Bagdad Railway. Nothing that had passed in the conversations which had from time to time taken place between Berlin and London led them to expect any such consummation; but should an understanding of this nature ever seem imminent, His Majesty's Government would not fail to give the French and Russian Governments timely notice, so that they might negotiate simultaneously and on parallel lines whatever arrangement they might consider most consonant to their interests. His Excellency, they believed, was now about to conduct negotiations with the German Ambassador for an agreement, of which one of the principal points would have reference to the linking up of the Bagdad Railway with an eventual North Persian railway system. They trusted, however, that no definite engagement would be entered as regards this question until His Majesty's Government were in a position to come to some understanding with Germany respecting the Gulf section of the Bagdad Railway.

Monsieur Sazonow replied that he feared that this would be impossible. Before going to Berlin he had explained his position to Mr. O'Beirne; and the assurances which he had since given to the German Government respecting the future linking up of the two railways had been forced on him by the fact that the privileged position which Russia had hitherto enjoyed with regard to railway construction in north Persia had terminated in March of the present year. By agreeing to meet Germany's wishes on this point, he had secured her renunciation of all claims to territorial concessions in north Persia, and had thus averted the danger of the concession for the construction of the Teheran-Khanikin branch ever falling into her hands. He had only put forward his demand for the right to construct the Sadijeh-Khanikin line on learning at the Russian Embassy in Berlin that it was commonly reported that the British and German Governments were on the point of coming to terms with regard to the Gulf section of the Bagdad Railway. His object in doing so had been to see what the Imperial Chancellor would say respecting such an understanding, as well as to obtain some equivalent concession for Russia in the event of Germany being prepared to give satisfaction to the claims of Great Britain and of France. I observed that, were Germany once to obtain a formal and unconditional promise from Russia concerning the linking up of the two railway systems, she would, I feared, be less disposed than ever to come to an understanding with us, more

⁽¹⁾ [Sir G. Buchanan's telegram (No. 331) of December 9, 1910, D 7.30 P.M., R. 8.30 P.M., summarized the information contained in this despatch. (F.O. 371/1016. 44649/36821/10/44A.)]

especially as such an understanding would apparently entail her ceding to Russia the construction of the Sadijeh-Khanikin line. I understood, however, that His Excellency had not agreed to any specified term within which the Teheran-Khanikin railway was to be built, so that he would still be free to withhold the execution of this promise until such time as we also had arranged matters with Germany. Monsieur Sazonow replied that many years must elapse before the latter railway could be constructed, so that we should have ample time to negotiate, and that if we desired it he would welcome British co-operation in the undertaking. He had only yesterday commenced his negotiations with the German Ambassador and thought that they were likely to last some three weeks. He had handed to Count Pourtales a draft project, of which he would send me a copy in the strictest confidence, but some of the proposals which it contained would, he thought, meet with opposition at Berlin.

I thanked His Excellency for this fresh proof of his confidence; and the conversation then turned to the questions of the Persian loan and of the conversion of the Russian debt. On my repeating to His Excellency the reasons which, as Mr. O'Beirne had already explained to him, made it impossible for us to throw over the Imperial Bank, Monsieur Sazonow said that he perfectly understood our position. I told him further that we were most anxious to do nothing to cause Russia any embarrassments, that we would use all our influence at Teheran to accelerate the conclusion of the Russian conversion scheme, and that, if the Persians proved really intractable, we would not raise objections to such measures as he might deem it necessary to take to safeguard her interests. His Excellency however appeared to be in a much calmer and more optimistic frame of mind than I had ventured to hope, and said that now that the Kashan incident had been satisfactorily settled, he did not think that it would be necessary for Russia to have recourse to any coercive measures. Without entering into any details, Monsieur Sazonow gave me to understand that the prospects of an early settlement of the conversion scheme were more favourable than they have been for some time past.

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

MINUTES.

It is hardly sufficient for M. Sazonow to have accepted as authentic, without enquiry in London, what was "commonly reported" at Berlin as to the intentions of the British and German Gov[ernmen]ts.

See No. 44998.(2)

A. P.

Dec[ember] 13, 1910.

I think M. Sazonoff ought to have asked us about this and ought also to have consulted us before committing himself to the Germans as regards the junction of the Bagdad and trans-Persian railways (Sir G. Buchanan exactly hit the point in this connexion).

It appears to me also that M. Sazonoff's fears of German demands for territorial concessions in Northern Persia are exaggerated since Germany has recognised the privileged position of the two Powers in Persia in a manner which would, I should have thought preclude any such demand. It seems therefore that the undertaking was not only precipitate but unnecessary.

As a practical question however all this is remote.

H. N.

R. P. M.

Approve Sir G. Buchanan's language.

We should note⁽³⁾ M. Sazonow's offer to associate us in the Tehran-Khanikin Railway, when constructed. If he would extend this offer to the Sadijé-Khanikin branch, it would be a very important concession as the F[oreign] O[ffice] has been severely criticized for abandoning the claim to construct this line, in view of the preponderance of our Gulf trade.

L. M.

E. G.

(2) [*v. infra*, pp. 581-2, No. 621.]

(3) [Marginal comment by Mr. A. Parker: "i.e. in Dep[artmen]t. A. P."]

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 371/1016.

44998/36821/10/44A.

(No. 483.) Secret.

Sir,

St. Petersburg, D. December 10, 1910.

R. December 13, 1910.

Since writing my despatch No. 482 of yesterday's date⁽¹⁾ I have received from Monsieur Sazonow, in the strictest confidence, the text of the accompanying draft agreement which he has submitted to the German Ambassador respecting Persia and the linking up of the Bagdad Railway with a future north Persian railway system.

In the conversation which I had with His Excellency yesterday, Monsieur Sazonow made a passing allusion to Article 1 of the draft agreement, but treated it as being devoid of any political significance. This article, however, gives me the impression of having been inspired by Germany for the purpose of detaching Russia from us in any opposition which we might make to the realisation of the Bagdad Railway scheme; and the wording of it seems to lend itself to the interpretation that Russia is to be debarred from supporting us in any steps which we may eventually have to take to prevent the Gulf section falling under exclusive German control.

The wording of Article II is somewhat involved; but Russia seems only to engage to link up the two railway systems on the completion of the north Persian railway. She does not undertake to complete that railway within any specified term, so that, by postponing its construction, she still apparently retains her liberty to fix her own time for connecting the Bagdad line with the north Persian railway.

It is curious that the draft agreement contains no reference whatever to the question as to whether Russia is to have the right to construct the Bagdad-Khanikin line.⁽²⁾ Monsieur Sazonow gave Mr. O'Beirne distinctly to understand that Germany had acquiesced in her right to do so, and on my alluding to the subject yesterday His Excellency by not contradicting me tacitly admitted that this was the case.

I will take an early opportunity of speaking to Monsieur Sazonow on the various points to which I have referred in this despatch.

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

Enclosure in No. 618.

Projet.

I.

Le Gouvernement Impérial se déclare disposé à ne pas faire d'opposition à la réalisation du chemin de fer de Bagdad et s'engage à n'apporter aucune entrave à la participation de capitaux étrangers à cette entreprise. Il va sans dire qu'aucun sacrifice de nature pécuniaire ou économique ne sera exigé de la part de la Russie.

II.

Afin d'aller au devant du désir du Gouvernement Allemand de relier le chemin de fer de Bagdad au futur réseau des chemins de fer en Perse, le Gouvernement Russe s'engage à procéder, lorsque ce réseau aura été construit, à la construction d'une ligne qui se raccorderait, sur la frontière turco-persane, à la ligne Sadidjé-Khanékine, quand cet embranchement du chemin de fer de Bagdad, ainsi que la ligne de Konia à Bagdad auront été achevés. Le Gouvernement Russe se réserve

⁽¹⁾ [v. immediately preceding document]

⁽²⁾ [Unsigned marginal note: "This is explained in the telegram [in] 45217." v. *infra*, p. 577, No. 620, note ⁽²⁾.]

de fixer en son temps le tracé définitif de la ligne de raccordement qui doit aboutir à Khanékine.

Les deux Gouvernements faciliteront le trafic international sur cette dernière ligne en évitant toutes mesures qui pourraient l'entraver, telles que l'établissement de droits de transit ou l'application d'un traitement différentiel.

III.

Le Gouvernement Allemand s'engage, pour sa part, à ne pas construire de lignes de chemin de fer dans la zone située entre la ligne de Bagdad et les frontières Russe et Persane au nord de Khanékine, ni à prêter son appui matériel ou diplomatique à des entreprises de ce genre dans la zone indiquée.

IV.

Le Gouvernement Allemand reconnaît n'avoir en Perse aucun intérêt d'ordre politique et n'y poursuivre que des buts commerciaux; reconnaissant, d'autre part, que la Russie a des intérêts spéciaux au point de vue politique, stratégique et économique dans le nord de la Perse, le Gouvernement Allemand déclare également qu'il n'a pas l'intention de rechercher pour lui-même, ou d'appuyer en faveur de ressortissants allemands ou de sujets étrangers au nord d'une ligne partant de Kasri-Chirin, passant par Isfahan, Iezd et Khakh, et aboutissant à la frontière afghane à la latitude de Ghazik, de concessions de chemin de fer, de routes, de navigation et de télégraphes, ainsi que d'autres concessions de caractère territorial.

D'autre part, le Gouvernement Impérial de Russie continuera à reconnaître à l'égard du commerce allemand en Perse le principe d'une parfaite égalité de traitement.

MINUTES.

I agree with what Sir G. Buchanan writes about Article I; except that we shall presumably confine any action we may "eventually take to prevent the Gulf section falling under exclusive German control" to negative measures such as a refusal to assent to the customs increase.

I think we might approve the course Sir G. Buchanan proposes to take,⁽³⁾ and instruct H[is] E[xc]ellency to emphasise how careful we have been to insist upon discussion, or at any rate definite agreement, only taking place *à quatre*: we might also express to M. Pichon the hope that France will not abandon the *à quatre* position.

Articles III and IV seem to give to Russia substantial advantages. Article III goes beyond the Black Sea Basin Agreement of 1900.⁽⁴⁾

A. P.

Dec[ember] 13, 1910.

Art[icle] 1 is so vague it may mean a great deal or very little.

The upshot appears to be that Russia is busy making her own terms with Germany as regards the Bagdad Railway and Persia without paying the slightest attention to our interests.

H. N.

The tel[egram] from Sir G. Buchanan since received⁽⁵⁾ carries us further.

R. P. M.

See minute thereon

L. M.

E. G.

⁽³⁾ [Marginal note: "Done by Sir E. Grey. See No 314 to St. P[etersburgh] of December 1910." *v. infra*, pp. 581-2, No. 621.]

⁽⁴⁾ [Sir G. Lowther's despatch (No. 57), D. January 27, R. February 1, 1909, enclosed the terms of this Russo-Turkish agreement. The copy is dated March 1900. It contained three paragraphs. The first restricted to Russian subjects the grant of foreign concessions for the construction of railways in the northern provinces of Asiatic Turkey, and provided that they should be on the same conditions as the Bagdad Railway Convention of December 12/24, 1899. The second was as follows: "Lors de la création de nouvelles lignes dans la région qui forme le littoral de la Mer Noire, il sera tenu compte des intérêts commerciaux des deux pays." The third excluded from the agreement the Ada-Bazar-Heraclea line, and those from Angora to Cæsarea-Kharput-Bitlis and Van. (F.O. 371/767. 4187/4187/09/44)]

⁽⁵⁾ [Telegram (No 334) of December 13, 1910, D. 7.52 p.m., R. 9 p.m., *v. infra*, pp. 577-9, No. 620, and note ⁽²⁾.]

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir A. Nicolson.⁽¹⁾

Private.⁽²⁾

My dear Nicolson,

St. Petersburg, December 10, 1910.

I am sending officially a full report of my conversation with Sazonow, as well as the text of the draft agreement which he has submitted to the German Ambassador.⁽³⁾

Nothing could have been better than the terms in which he spoke of the desire of the Russian Government to maintain the closest possible understanding with us; but I confess to feeling rather nervous as to the trend of the negotiations with Pourtalès. He spoke in a very casual manner of the first Article of the draft agreement, saying that it was devoid of any practical political importance. But now that I have seen the text, I cannot help feeling that it has been inspired by Germany for the express purpose of depriving us of Russian support in the event of our having to make a firm stand against the Gulf section of the Bagdad Railway falling under the exclusive control of Germany. I understand the reasons which he gave for his having to consent to the linking up of the Bagdad Railway with the future north Persian railway system, but I do not think that he is acting quite loyally by us in subscribing to the terms of Article I. It also strikes me that it was hardly correct on his part to put forward his demand for the right to construct the Sadijeh-Khanikin line on the strength of the rumours which he heard at the Russian Embassy in Berlin of our being on the point of coming to an arrangement with Germany respecting the Gulf section. His doing so seems to me to imply a lack of confidence in us, as he surely ought to have known that we would never come to any such understanding with Germany without giving him due notice. It is very curious that the draft agreement contains no reference whatever to this matter and I sincerely trust that there are no additional articles to the draft agreement which he is keeping back from us. I will take the first possible opportunity of speaking to him on the points to which I have referred above.

In the course of our conversation I remarked that I personally had no hope of our coming to terms with Germany with regard to the Bagdad Railway, as Germany expected a very big quid pro quo for meeting our wishes on the subject. He had, I said, been told by you confidentially what that "quid pro quo" was. He replied in the affirmative, saying that we should no doubt require something more than the control over the Gulf section before concluding any political arrangement with Germany. He then added in a rather significant manner that there was always the question of naval armaments. I said that it was equally difficult for us to come to an understanding with her on this point, but that he might be quite sure that we should never do anything without taking Russia into our confidence. I feel convinced that Kiderlen has told him all about our secret negotiations and it is rather remarkable that the article in the "Daily Chronicle" which was evidently inspired by the German Foreign Office,⁽⁴⁾ should have been published on the eve of the Russian visit to Potsdam.

I should much like to be able to tell him confidentially of Kiderlen's recent behaviour to us in denying that he ever said anything to Goschen about the British people having been taught by their Government to regard Germany as their natural enemy.⁽⁵⁾ It might put him more on his guard in his future dealings with the German Government.

⁽¹⁾ [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe. The endorsement is initialled by Sir Edward Grey.]

⁽²⁾ [Carnock MSS., Vol. II of 1910.]

⁽³⁾ [v. immediately preceding document, and *encl.*]

⁽⁴⁾ [v. *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. VI, pp. 541-2, No. 410.]

⁽⁵⁾ [v. *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. VI, pp. 561-2, No. 419, and *notes* (4) and (5).]

I am writing this letter against time as I have to go a round of official visits, and with workmen hammering in the only available room I have to work in—so forgive any faults it may contain.

Ever yours sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

No. 620.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1016.

45697/36821/10/44A.

(No. 486.) Secret.

Sir,

St. Petersburg, D. December 13, 1910.

R. December 19, 1910.

In a conversation which I had with the Minister for Foreign Affairs this afternoon⁽²⁾ I told His Excellency that, as the text of the draft agreement⁽³⁾ which he had submitted to Count Pourtalès respecting Persia and the linking up of the two railway systems could only have reached you this morning, I was not able to say what impression it had made on His Majesty's Government. As however there seemed to me to be several points in it which were not very clear, I should like to give him my own personal views with regard to it, so that His Excellency might be able to correct me had I failed to understand the purport of some of its articles. I had, I said, always understood that, when the idea of the "négociations à quatre" had to be abandoned, that of parallel negotiations had been substituted for it, in order that the Powers of the "Triple Entente" might be in a position to present a united front to Germany in all matters in which they were respectively interested in connexion with the Bagdad Railway. Now, in return for Germany's renunciation of any claim to railway concessions, &c., in north Persia, Russia under Article II of the draft agreement engaged to link up the Bagdad Railway with the future North Persian Railway when that line had been constructed. That engagement would not render Germany more disposed to meet the wishes of France and Great Britain, though I quite understood the reasons which had induced His Excellency to take it. Article 1, however, went still further, as, were effect to be given to its provisions Russia, it seemed to me, would have to disinterest herself in all questions touching the construction and control of the Bagdad Railway and would thus be debarred from co-operating with or supporting France and Great Britain in any diplomatic action which they might have to take to safeguard their interests. The gist of the agreement would therefore appear to be that Germany was to have a free hand as regarded the Bagdad Railway, while Russia was to be secured against German competition in north Persia.

Monsieur Sazonow replied that Article 1 was not nearly so far-reaching as I had imagined, and that it must be read in connection with Article II, where mention was expressly made of the Konia-Bagdad section. The engagement which it contained had only reference to the Railway as far as Bagdad, and not to the whole railway system inclusive of the Gulf section and of its other branches. He did not believe that Germany could ever build the Gulf section by herself. In the first place she could not find the necessary capital, and in the second we would always be able to prevent her by bringing pressure to bear on Turkey. We had but to do what we had done in Persia conjointly with Russia, when we warned the Persian Government

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe; and as having been seen at Berlin.]

⁽²⁾ [Sir G. Buchanan's telegram (No. 334) of December 13, D. 7.52 P.M., R. 9 P.M., summarized the information contained in this despatch. (F.O. 371/1016. 45217/36821/10/44A.)]

⁽³⁾ [For text of the draft Agreement *v. supra*, pp. 574-5, No. 618, *encl.*]

that the grant of any concessions that would injuriously affect our strategical or political interests to the subjects of a third Power would be regarded as an unfriendly act.⁽⁴⁾

I observed that there seemed to me to be no analogy between the two cases, as the action which we had taken in Persia had reference to future concessions, whereas in the case of the Bagdad Railway we were concerned with a concession which had been granted to Germany years ago. To return however to the question of the scope of Article 1, I had, I said, not the slightest doubt from the assurances which he had given Mr. O'Beirne and from what he had told me, as to what His Excellency's own intentions had been; but I feared that, unless it was distinctly stated in that Article that the engagement given by the Russian Government had only reference to the Railway as far as Bagdad, a different interpretation might be placed on it by others. Monsieur Sazonow replied that the German Government were fully aware of the limited scope attached to this Article. He had, from the very beginning of his conversations at Berlin, referred to the eventual grant of the control of the Gulf section to Great Britain; and when he had put forward in this connexion his request that Russia should have the right to construct the Sadijeh-Khanikin line, the Chancellor had raised no difficulties. No reference was made in the draft agreement to this right, as owing to its being contingent on the grant of the control of the Gulf section to Great Britain it did not come within its purview. I replied that, from the experience which I had had of German methods, I very much doubted whether that Government would remember the explanations which His Excellency had given them when the occasion arose, and that they would be much more likely to hold him to the strict letter of the bond which he was about to sign. I should therefore personally prefer, were I in His Excellency's position, to alter the text, so that there could be no possible misunderstanding. This, Monsieur Sazonow said, was now impossible, as the draft agreement had already been dispatched to Berlin, but he did not anticipate any such misunderstanding. I then enquired whether, after the signature of the agreement, His Excellency would be able, so far as the Gulf section of the Bagdad Railway was concerned, to co-operate with us and to support us in the future in the same way as in the past. To this Monsieur Sazonow at once replied in the affirmative.

I then turned the conversation on to the subject of the speech which the German Chancellor has recently made in the Reichstag respecting the Potsdam interview and the relations between the two Empires.⁽⁵⁾ After expressing his satisfaction that Monsieur Bethmann-Hollweg should have publicly confirmed what he had said to him with regard to Germany's policy in the Near East, Monsieur Sazonow told me that the French Ambassador had just been to see him and had questioned him with regard to the passage where reference was made to an engagement which had been taken to the effect that neither of the two Governments would join a combination directed against the other. There was, His Excellency said, not the slightest reason for the uneasiness which this passage has apparently caused at Paris. In the course of their conversations the Chancellor had declared that the German Government had no desire to detach Russia from the Triple Entente, while he (Monsieur Sazonow) had made a similar declaration with regard to the position of Germany in the Triple Alliance. Assurances were subsequently exchanged to the effect that neither of these combinations contained any point that was directed in a hostile sense against Russia or Germany respectively. Monsieur Sazonow then observed that the Chancellor had made some interesting remarks on the subject of naval armaments, and enquired whether it was true that His Majesty's Government had put forward no definite proposals on the subject. I replied that intermittent conversations had

(4) [Marginal note by Mr. A. Parker: "But in Turkey the concession was granted years ago. The cases are not analogous as Sir G. Buchanan pointed out. A. P."]

(5) [*cp. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. VI, p. 567, No. 422. *cp. also The Times*, December 12, 1910.]

taken place between the two Governments, but that His Majesty's Government had so far had no occasion to draft any definite proposals. As regarded what the Chancellor had said respecting an economic or political understanding, His Excellency might be sure that His Majesty's Government would never commit themselves to such a policy without first consulting the Russian Government.

Our conversation, which was throughout of the friendliest character, gave me the impression that Monsieur Sazonow was quite sincere in what he told me, but that owing to his lack of experience in the conduct of difficult negotiations and to an unfortunate habit of arriving at his decisions without giving himself sufficient time to reflect on their possible consequences, he is allowing himself to be outmanœuvred by Monsieur Kiderlen.

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

P.S.—I omitted to mention that Monsieur Sazonow told me that the Russian Government had taken no engagement whatever with regard to the question of the four per cent. customs increase, as they preferred to treat it as a matter quite distinct from the Bagdad Railway. I gathered that is the reason why the statement was inserted in Article 1 to the effect that no sacrifice of a pecuniary or economic character would be required on the part of Russia.

G. W. B.

MINUTES.

Sir G. Buchanan spoke extremely well: perhaps he might have a special approval in regard to this despatch.

The last paragraph and the p.s. are interesting.

I wish we could induce M. Sazonow to send in an explanatory note at Berlin with regard to the Gulf Section of the Bagdad R[ai]l[wa]y.

A. P.

Dec[ember] 19, 1910.

The postscript is satisfactory, but in spite of M. Sazonoff's confidence that his reading of Art[icle] 1 of his draft agreement is understood and accepted at Berlin, I should greatly prefer to have the point settled in writing.

H. N.

Approve.⁽⁶⁾

L. M

The record of my last conversation with C[oun]t Benckendorff should be attached to this document, when circulated.⁽⁷⁾

A. N.

As to the economic or political understanding with Russia the statement should be that we should be ready to say as much to Germany as M. Sazonow has said, but should not enter into any understanding which would impair our relations with Russia. This can be said to Count Benckendorff when opportunity offers in connection with this despatch.

E. G.

⁽⁶⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's despatch (No. 322) of December 23, 1910, approved Sir G. Buchanan's language. (F.O. 371/1016. 45697/36821/10/44A.)]

⁽⁷⁾ [The reference is probably to Sir A. Nicolson's conversation with Count Benckendorff on December 19, which related chiefly to the interpretation of Article 1. Count Benckendorff read part of a private letter from M. Sazonov, who said that in Article 1 he had "only in view" the line Konia-Bagdad, and that any prolongation of the line to the Gulf or to the Mediterranean must be a matter for discussions with all the Powers concerned. Sir A. Nicolson commented that the whole point was whether, as M. Sazonov had told Sir G. Buchanan, he had made this "perfectly clear to the Germans." He suggested that if the words "jusqu'à Bagdad" were added to Article I it would be clear. Sir Edward Grey minuted this record: "M. Sazonov has gone too far and has involved himself in difficulties. E. G." (F.O. 371/1016. 46157/36821/10/44.) *cp. infra*, p. 585, No. 624.]

There is an important passage in this despatch which appears to merit special attention: namely the reference to the alleged agreement between Russia and Germany to the effect that neither Power would join a combination directed against the other. The Chancellor's words in his speech to the Reichstag were reported in the "Times" as follows:—

"I would indicate, as the result of the recent interview, that it was once more established that neither Power commits itself to any combination which might have an aggressive point against the other."

This looks like a very general and rather vague kind of interchange of views. It is however remarkable that in the weekly Notes in the "Grenzboten" of Jan[uary] 4⁽⁸⁾—a paper which is as a rule so well informed on foreign affairs as to enjoy the reputation of being directly inspired by the Berlin Foreign Office—there appears a passage indicating that the arrangement already arrived at between Germany and Russia, is much more specific. I annex the passage accompanied by a translation, which Mr. Parker has made for me. It will be seen that Russia is stated to have agreed to remain neutral in case England or France or both "begin" a war against Germany, whilst Germany engaged to remain neutral in case Austria goes to war with Russia.

Such an agreement is very much on the lines which Germany generally favours, and closely resembles the old "reinsurance" treaty concluded with Russia by Bismarck,⁽⁹⁾ and subsequently allowed to lapse by the German emperor. There is therefore on the face of it some likelihood that some such definite arrangement has now actually been concluded. If so, it is rather remarkable that M. Sazonoff should have said nothing about it to us, beyond the vague generalities reported by Sir G. Buchanan.

It might perhaps be worth while to instruct Sir G. Buchanan to ask M. Sazonoff whether the statement in the "Grenzboten" is accurate and, if so, what form the agreement took.

E. A. C.

Jan[uary] 9

We do not know the terms of the Franco-Russian Alliance⁽¹⁰⁾ but if the statement in the Grenzboten is correct it is comprehensible that uneasiness should be felt in Paris.

H. N.

Instruct Sir G. Buchanan or speak to Count Benckendorff. If the statement is true, the value of the friendly understanding between Russia, France and ourselves as a factor for peace is practically destroyed. The party which "begins" the war need not be the cause of the war.

L. M.

I have the gravest doubts as to the accuracy of the "Grenzboten's" statement. It would mean the disruption of the Triple Alliance and of the Russo-French Alliance and would be inconsistent with the recent declarations of the Emperor Nicolas, M. Stolypin and M. Sazonoff. This is a big morsel to swallow. As will be seen in the passage marked in blue in annexed desp[atch],⁽¹¹⁾ M. Sazonoff stated that the Chancellor explicitly announced he did not wish to detach Russia from the Triple Entente. If the Grenzboten were correct M. Sazonoff without the knowledge of his Emperor, and in contradiction to his solemn assertions has agreed to a radical alteration of the whole European situation. I cannot believe this—and I do not think it would be wise to make any allusion either to M. Sazonoff or to C[oun]t Benckendorff of the matter. It would be impugning the veracity of M. Sazonoff and I should be inclined to add his common sense also.

A. N.

M. Sazonow has said there is nothing in writing except the Bagdad R[ailwa]y draft. It would be useless to press him further just now: we and the French have already got all we can out of him.

E. G.

⁽⁸⁾ [Not reproduced as the contents of the article are sufficiently indicated above.]

⁽⁹⁾ [*cp. Pribram*, Vol. I, pp 274–81.]

⁽¹⁰⁾ [*cp. ibid.*, Vol. II, pp 206–21.]

⁽¹¹⁾ [*v. supra*, p 578.]

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1016.
44998/36821/10/44A.
(No. 314.) Secret.

Sir,

Foreign Office, December 15, 1910.

Count Benckendorff told me to-day⁽²⁾ that M. Sazonow was personally favourable to a trans-Persian railway scheme. Count Benckendorff believed that the other members of the Russian Government were also favourably inclined. But he was not in a position to commit his Government with regard to the question, and he could not say anything to me about it officially.

I replied that I was in much the same position. Personally, I was favourable to the project, and I thought the result of the good understanding between Russia and us ought to be that the idea of a Russian invasion of India should disappear. The idea had always seemed to me a somewhat remote one. Nevertheless, if the project of the Railway became a practical one to which we were committed, the first question we should be asked would be whether all the strategical considerations had been taken into account. I was going to have these looked into, with a view to overcoming any objections there might be.

I then pointed out that what had recently passed between M. Sazonow and the German Government respecting the Bagdad Railway had made me see that a new factor might have to be taken into account. For, if the Bagdad Railway was to be linked with the trans-Persian Railway, the question would arise whether, in times of Pan-Islamic excitement it might not be possible for a mass of Turkish Mahommedan troops to be precipitated on to the Indian frontier.

Count Benckendorff admitted that this might be a serious consideration; but he explained that M. Sazonow would not favour a junction between Khanikin and Ispahan, but only a junction northwards from Khanikin towards Tehran, and the junction would be made only in the indefinite future.

I pressed Count Benckendorff as to how M. Sazonow stood with regard to the Bagdad Railway. I reminded him that our position had been that we were quite willing that negotiations should take place between Sir Ernest Cassel, for instance, and Herr Gwinner, with the object of securing for us the control of the Bagdad end of the Railway;⁽³⁾ but we had always been quite explicit in saying that, when we found that an arrangement satisfactory to us could be made, we should not be able to confirm it until satisfactory arrangements had been made by Germany with Russia and France. In other words, negotiations might proceed separately with Germany, but a settlement could not be reached until we were all satisfied.⁽⁴⁾

Count Benckendorff said that this was exactly the position of M. Sazonow also. Both as regards the linking-up with Tehran and the concession of a branch from Khanikin to Bagdad, Russia was prepared to be satisfied and herself to satisfy Germany, but she could not accept or make this arrangement until an arrangement had been come to with us and with France as well about the Bagdad Railway. Count Benckendorff made it quite clear in answer to questions that the branch from Khanikin to Teheran and from Khanikin to Bagdad were on the same footing in this respect.

I expressed satisfaction at hearing that this was the position. But,—though I

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to Lord Crewe; to Mr. Haldane. A copy was sent to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [For Count Benckendorff's account of this conversation, *v. Siebert*, pp. 527-8. *cp.* also M. Sazonov's comment on Count Benckendorff's language, *ibid.*, pp. 528-9, and *infra*, pp. 586-7, No. 626.]

⁽³⁾ [For correspondence relating to the Gwinner-Cassel negotiations *v. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. VI, pp. 380-433, Chapter XLVI, section II.]

⁽⁴⁾ [*cp.* *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. VI, pp. 386-7, Nos. 284-5, pp. 392-3, No. 292, p. 402, No. 301.]

made no observation to Count Benckendorff that would weaken the force of what he had said to me,—I think it necessary to observe to Your Excellency that M. Sazonow has not yet expressed himself so definitely at St. Petersburg.

[I am, &c.]
E. G[REY].

No. 622.

Mr. L. D. Carnegie to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/907.

45861/40383/10/18.

(No. 458.)

Sir,

Paris, D. December 15, 1910.

R. December 16, 1910.

There have been lately some signs in the French Press of dissatisfaction felt in France at the idea that the Potsdam interviews between the Russian and German statesmen may bring about such friendly relations between Russia and Germany that Franco-Russian relations will suffer thereby. One of the Radical papers inquired, for instance, whether Monsieur Pichon was going to sleep while a Russo-German "rapprochement" was taking place under his nose.

It is understood that Monsieur Pichon will speak on foreign affairs in the Chamber at an early date. The "Matin" which is now largely used by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, as has not infrequently been the case on similar occasions, appears to be preparing the way for His Excellency's pronouncement. Yesterday this paper published an article to show that there was nothing in recent events which need disturb French equanimity, and the following observations, stated to have been made by Monsieur Pichon to a Deputy, were quoted:—

"Rien de ce qui arrive d'heureux à notre alliée ne peut nous contrarier, de même que rien qui nous arrive de bon ne peut lui nuire. Les liens qui nous unissent ne sont ni égoïstes ni querelleurs."

Monsieur Pichon added his conviction that the Russian Government were more than ever determined not to abandon their policy of an alliance with France and of an "entente" with England.

The "Matin" of today publishes an interview between its correspondent in Russia and Monsieur Sazonoff. The latter authorized him to make public the following declaration:—

"Je n'ai rien à ajouter ni rien à retrancher aux déclarations que j'ai faites à mon retour de Potsdam. Mes conversations avec Messieurs de Bethmann-Hollweg et de Kiderlen-Waechter ont eu pour base l'intégrité absolue des groupements actuels. Les hommes d'Etat allemands savent que la Russie est toujours fidèle à ses engagements et n'a aucun motif ni aucun prétexte de renoncer à son alliance étroite avec la France et à son entente cordiale avec l'Angleterre."

I have, &c.

LANCELOT D. CARNEGIE.

MINUTES.

M. Pichon was nevertheless much annoyed at M. Sazonoff's visit to Potsdam because it has not been preceded by a visit to Paris and when M. Louis telegraphed the substance of the account given him by M. Sazonoff of what had taken place in the course of his interviews with German statesmen and suggested that M. Sazonoff should be thanked for his communication the proposal was negatived by M. Pichon and M. Sazonoff got no thanks.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch was sent on December 29, 1910, to Berlin (as No. 342); to St. Petersburg (as No. 326).]

M Sazonoff in the circumstances, could hardly have gone to Paris first but he might have done well to go there immediately after Berlin and explain matters.

In spite of a brave show in public and in the press M. Pichon is certainly nervous on the subjects of Franco-Russian and Russo-German relations

H. N.
Dec[ember] 16, 1910.
L M.

I should think that the speeches interchanged on the occasion of M. Iswolsky presenting his Letters⁽²⁾ should tranquillize French opinion.

A. N.
E. G.

(2) [M. Isvolski became Ambassador at Paris on October 17, 1910.]

No. 623.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1016.
45699/36821/10/44A.
(No. 488.) Secret.
Sir,

*St. Petersburg, D. December 15, 1910.
R. December 19, 1910.*

I had the honour of being received to-day⁽²⁾ in Audience by the Emperor of Russia at the Palace of Tsarskoe Selo and of delivering to His Majesty my Letter of Credence, as well as the personal Letter with which the King had graciously charged me. In doing so I repeated to His Majesty the assurances which I had already given to Monsieur Sazonow as to the earnest desire of the King and of His Majesty's Government to maintain the most intimate understanding with Russia.

The Emperor in reply said that He reciprocated this wish with all His heart, and that He would always render His Majesty's Government every assistance that it was possible for Him to give. The Anglo-Russian Understanding had, His Majesty continued, already borne excellent fruit; and he thought that it was most important that Great Britain and Russia, as two great Asiatic Powers, should follow the same broad lines of policy in their respective possessions in Asia. Great Britain had of late experienced considerable troubles in India, and Russia was likely soon to be confronted with similar difficulties in Turkestan. An active propaganda was being carried on there by the Mullahs, and His Majesty feared that we were both threatened with a serious Panislamistic movement. I observed that it was rather with the Hindus than with the Mahommedans that our troubles in India had originated, but that many persons attributed to the Young Turks the desire to encourage such a movement as that of which His Majesty had spoken. I ventured however to think that apart from what it might accomplish in Asia, the Anglo-Russian understanding was a very valuable instrument for maintaining peace, as well as the balance of power in Europe. The Emperor smiled and said that the latter was a very important matter.

His Majesty then proceeded to speak of His recent visit to Potsdam. It would, He said, have been impossible for Him, after the long stay which He had made in Germany, to have avoided visiting the Emperor William; and He had also thought that such a visit might do good. He had, however, been very agreeably surprised and pleased with the warmth of the reception which had been accorded Him, and by the evidently sincere desire of the German Government to cultivate good and friendly relations with Russia. This result of His visit had given Him considerable satisfaction. I ventured to reply that the relaxation of the tension which had at one time existed between Germany and Russia could not but be welcome to His

(1) [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe; and as having been seen at Berlin.]

(2) [Sir G. Buchanan's telegram (No. 335) Secret of December 15, 1910, D. 8.24 P.M., R. 9.15 P.M., reported this interview more briefly. (F.O. 371/1016. 45351/36821/10/44A.)]

Majesty's Government. They desired nothing better than that both Russia and Great Britain should live on friendly terms with Germany, as this must undoubtedly promote the cause of European peace. They would not, however, in their desire to establish good relations with Germany, come to any understanding with that Empire without first consulting with His Majesty and the Imperial Government. On the other hand, they trusted that the Imperial Government would not commit itself to any definite engagement *vis-à-vis* of Germany which could in any way preclude it from co-operating with them or from supporting them in questions in which they were interested, more especially in that of the Bagdad Railway, without previously taking them into its confidence. The Emperor replied that the assurances which He had received last year on this subject had given Him great satisfaction, and that He would certainly act in the same frank and loyal manner. He would not, His Majesty assured me, contract any engagement respecting the Bagdad Railway without first submitting it to His Majesty's Government and consulting their views. As the Emperor made no allusion whatever to the Draft Agreement⁽³⁾ which had been communicated to us by Monsieur Sazonow, I did not, on my part, venture to refer to it. I would however call attention to the fact that the Emperor's assurances go much further than those given me by Monsieur Sazonow, as, while His Majesty distinctly said that He would consult our views, His Excellency, on my taking exception to the wording of Article I, declared that it was too late to alter it, as it had already been communicated to the German Government.⁽⁴⁾ It is difficult to explain the discrepancy between the two statements, except on the supposition that the Emperor has not followed closely the details of the negotiations which have been taking place between the Foreign Minister and the German Ambassador.

During the course of our further conversation the Emperor alluded, with evident satisfaction, to what the Chancellor had told Monsieur Sazonow respecting Germany's policy in the Near East. As His Majesty seemed rather at a loss to account for the reasons which had induced the Chancellor to give such far-reaching assurances, I observed that Count Aehrenthal did not appear to be in great favour at present in Berlin on account of the independent line which he had taken in his dealings with the German Government. His position had been somewhat shaken of late; and the German Government would doubtless not be sorry to get rid of a statesman who had, on more than one occasion, asserted his right to treat with Germany on equal terms. To this the Emperor replied that He could never again place the slightest confidence in anything which Count Aehrenthal might say and that, if he fell, his successor, whoever he might be, would probably prove no more subservient to Germany than he had been. The bitter tone in which his Majesty said this gave me the impression that, so long as Count Aehrenthal is at the Ballplatz, there is but little chance of an Austro-Russian *rapprochement*.

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

MINUTE.

M. Sazonow has done about the Bagdad R[ailwa]y just what the Emperor said he would not do. We may have to make use of the Emperor's promise in future dealings with M. Sazonow.
E. G.

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 574-5, No. 618, *encl.*]

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 577-9, No. 620]

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir A. Nicolson.⁽¹⁾

Private.⁽²⁾

My dear Nicolson,

St. Petersburg, December 16, 1910.

I am very anxious to know what you think of the Draft Agreement⁽³⁾ which Sazonow has communicated to us. As I told him at my second interview, I do not doubt for a moment that he intended it to refer solely to the Railway as far as Bagdad, but I am equally certain that when the time comes for giving effect to its provisions the Germans will hold him to the strict letter of the first article and will not pay the slightest attention to any explanations which he may have given them. He tried to persuade me that if his first article be read in connexion with the second, the meaning is perfectly clear; but, as I pointed out to him, the second deals exclusively with the question of linking up the two Railway Systems by a branch line from Sadijeh to Khanikin. I urged him to clear up all doubts as to the real intention of the first article by a slight alteration in its text; but he declared that this was impossible, now that the draft had been sent to Berlin. All that I could get out of him was the distinct assurance that the Russian Government will give us the same co-operation and support, as regards the Gulf section, after the signature of the Agreement as they have hitherto given us.

My Audience with the Emperor went off very well. His visit to Potsdam has not made the slightest difference in what I believe to be His earnest wish to maintain the closest possible understanding with us. He is evidently much pleased that Russia's relations to Germany have now been placed on a friendly footing; but He assured me positively that He would always render His Majesty's Government every possible assistance that it was in his power to give. His assurance that the Russian Government would conclude no arrangement with Germany respecting the Bagdad Railway without first submitting it to us and consulting our views is also most satisfactory; though I cannot say that Sazonow is acting up to it. To communicate a text of an agreement which cannot be altered is not of much use to us; but I naturally could not say anything to the Emperor on this subject, as His Majesty never once referred to the negotiations which Sazonow is conducting with Pourtales.

Ever yours sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

P.S.—I have just come back from the Foreign Office and have only time for a line before the Bag is closed. Sazonow told me that he had written a long private letter to Benckendorff, telling him to take the first opportunity of explaining to you or Sir Edward the purport of the Draft Agreement.⁽⁴⁾ He repeated again that he had made it perfectly clear to the Germans that the first article only referred to the Railway as far as Bagdad. I asked whether, supposing that we had any suggestions to make, it would be now too late to give effect to them and he replied in the affirmative. Could you not point out to Benckendorff that it would be better in future if they would communicate to us any such agreements before they had taken a form which could not be modified?

He, of his own accord, said that he was very anxious to withdraw the Russian troops from Kazvin and that he much regretted that Poklewsky had prevented their being withdrawn long ago. I suggested, as Sir Edward told me to, that the conclusion of the Russian Conversion Scheme might offer a favourable occasion for such a withdrawal. He did not contradict me, but said that unfortunately the negotiations had again come to a deadlock, as the Persians had refused to meet

⁽¹⁾ [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe. The endorsement is initialled by Sir Edward Grey.]

⁽²⁾ [Carnock MSS., Vol. II of 1910.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 574-5, No. 618, *encl.*]

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 579, No. 620, *note* (7).]

the wishes of the Russian Finance Minister in some trifling matters. He was going, however, to send Klemm, the Director of the Asiatic Department, to meet Nasr-ul-Mulk on his arrival on Russian territory and to accompany him for a certain distance. He trusted that the Regent might be able to exercise a salutary influence on the Government.

G. W. B.

No. 625.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1016.
45351/36821/10/44A.
(No. 315.) Secret.

Sir,

Foreign Office, December 20, 1910.

I have received your Excellency's telegram No. 335, Secret, of the 15th instant,⁽²⁾ reporting your conversation with His Majesty the Emperor on the occasion of your recent audience.

I approve your Excellency's language on that occasion.

With regard to the question of a possible junction of the Bagdad Railway with the proposed line from Tehran to Khanikin, and the importance of the Russian, French, and British Governments acting in close co-operation in the matter, I consider that it would be expedient if your Excellency were to communicate to the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs an *aide-mémoire* based upon the recent conversation with the Russian Ambassador at this Court, recorded in my despatch No. 314, Secret, of the 15th instant.⁽³⁾

Such a communication may not improbably have the effect of eliciting a written reply.

I am, &c.

E. GREY.

⁽¹⁾ [The text given above is taken from the *Confidential Print* as the original cannot be traced.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 583, No. 623, note ⁽²⁾]

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 581-2, No. 621.]

No. 626.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1016.
47200/36821/10/44.
(No. 321.) Secret.

Sir,

Foreign Office, December 21, 1910.

The Russian Ambassador called to-day to say that he wished to correct a statement which he had made to me in his conversation regarding the Bagdad Railway on the 15th December (see my despatch of that date).⁽²⁾

He had then said that the position of the Russian Government was exactly the same as that of His Majesty's Government; this was, however, not the case, the position being that, when Germany had completed the sections Konia-Bagdad and

⁽¹⁾ [The text given above is taken from the *Confidential Print* as the original cannot be traced.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 581-2, No. 621. *cp. Siebert*, pp. 528-9.]

Bagdad (Sadijeh)—Khanikin, the Russian Government were pledged to join lines which Russia might eventually construct in the north of Persia with the line to be constructed to Khanikin from the main line of the Bagdad Railway. This undertaking, his Excellency added, was independent of any arrangement with other Powers.

Sir A. Nicolson told Count Benckendorff, to whom he read my despatch No. 314 to your Excellency, that the necessary correction would be made.

In these circumstances your Excellency need take no action in the sense of my despatch No. 315, Secret, of the 20th instant.⁽³⁾

I am, &c.

E. GREY.

(3) [v. immediately preceding document.]

No. 627.

Sir F. Cartwright to Sir A. Nicolson.⁽¹⁾

Private.⁽²⁾

Dear Nicolson,

Vicenna, December 23, 1910.

While in Paris I had the opportunity of seeing M. Briand, M. Pichon and M. Delcassé, and although what I learnt from them is probably not very new to you, yet as I had it from the mouths of leading French politicians, it may be worth while reporting to you what I heard from them.

I found that very serious dissatisfaction existed in political circles in Paris with regard to Sazonoff's attitude in Berlin, especially on account of the growing belief that the Russian Minister went in search of a conversation with Berlin, rather than that Berlin encouraged the conversation with Russia. In Paris it is feared that through inexperience Sazonoff went further than he had originally intended to do, and that he had allowed himself to be drawn out by finding that his advances were received in a most sympathetic manner in Berlin. Kiderlen-Waechter appears to have acted with considerable duplicity in this affair, according to my French informants; to Sazonoff he seems to have held up a picture of Austrian intrigues in the Balkans, and to have assured him that Germany disapproved of Aehrenthal's attitude in that direction, but that if he presumed to go too far in carrying out an anti-Russian policy in the Near East, Germany would be ready to assist Russia in holding back Austria's hand, even to the extent, if necessary, of allowing Aehrenthal to fall.⁽³⁾ To Jules Cambon Kiderlen-Waechter, I am told, spoke in a very different tone; he declared to the French Ambassador that Austria and Germany stood together side by side, and that Germany would support her ally through thick and thin. According to the French account Sazonoff does not appear to have at once fully informed the Czar of what took place at Berlin, and that he looked upon the conversation with Kiderlen-Waechter as of minor importance. Sazonoff was therefore considerably astonished when a little while later Pourtales, the German Ambassador in St. Petersburg, came to him and asked for a reply to the proposals put forward at Berlin. Saunders, the "Times" correspondent in Paris, told me that the calm way in which the Sazonoff indiscretions in Berlin had been viewed in London, had produced a somewhat unfavourable impression in Paris, and that

⁽¹⁾ [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe; and as having been seen by the Secretary of State.]

⁽²⁾ [Carnock MSS., Vol. II of 1910.]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. infra*, p. 600, No. 637.]

he had been approached with a view to his waking up British public opinion on this matter. Saunders very wisely, however, appears to have declined to make any unnecessary stir about this incident in the "Times" newspaper.

I asked Isvolsky what he thought of Sazonoff's attitude in Berlin. He tried to make light of what had taken place there and said that after all Sazonoff had only followed the lines of a memorandum drawn up by Isvolsky himself some four years back.⁽¹⁾ and that, as regarded the Bagdad railway, nothing of any importance had been done, and that everything Sazonoff had proposed was conditional on the approval of England and France. . . .⁽²⁾

Yours truly,

FAIRFAX F. CARTWRIGHT.

⁽¹⁾ [Reference to M. Isvolski's visit to Berlin in 1906 occurs in *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol IV, pp. 246-9, No. 231; pp. 251-2, No 238, pp 412-3, No 369]

⁽²⁾ [The omitted paragraphs of this letter are irrelevant to the subject of the present chapter and add nothing of importance to information given elsewhere]

No. 628.

Lord Knollys to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 371/1016.

45697/36821/10/44A.

Sandringham, Norfolk, December 25, 1910.

The King thinks it is very important, so as to prevent any misunderstanding in the future, that the point concerning Art[icle] 1 of M. Sazonow's draft agreement,⁽¹⁾ should be in writing, and he hopes that this may be arranged.

K[NOLLYS].

MINUTE.

Ans[were]d by Sir A. Nicolson. Dec[ember] 28, 1910.

⁽¹⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp. 574-5, No 618, *encl.*; pp. 577-9, No 620.]

No. 629.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1016.

46584/36821/10/44A.

Tel. (No. 340.) Secret.

St. Petersburg, December 26, 1910.

D. 8.38 P.M.

R. 11 P.M.

In conversation with Minister for Foreign Affairs this afternoon I reverted to the subject of the draft agreement.⁽²⁾ His Excellency repeated that we had nothing to fear from the wording of the first article, that Russia's position as regarded the Gulf section would be the same as before, and that the only effect it might have in the future would be to create slight unpleasantness between St. Petersburg and Berlin. During discussion at Potsdam the questions of the Bagdad Railway as far as that town and of the whole Bagdad Railway system had been treated separately. It had never struck him that any other interpretation could be placed on article 1 than that which he had given to it, or he would have worded it otherwise.

I remarked that unless the real meaning of the article was clearly given in the text complications were certain to arise sooner or later, and that I could not

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Paris (as No. 7). A copy was sent to the India Office.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp 574-5, No. 618, *encl.*]

see why, if the German Government were at liberty to suggest amendments to the draft, Russian Government could not add a few words to article 1 so as to leave no doubt as to its real meaning.

Without taking an actual engagement, his Excellency promised to see whether he could insert the words "up to" before Bagdad.

MINUTES.

This is satisfactory, so far as it goes.

H. N.
A. N.

M Sazonow will find that a good many tares will come up in the crop that he has sown in German soil

E. G.

No. 630.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

48/48/11/44.

(No. 496.) Secret.

St. Petersburg, D. December 26, 1910.

Sir,

R. January 2, 1911.

I have in another despatch recorded the bitter language used by the "Novoe Vremya" in speaking of Austria in connection with the Wassitch trial, which has just been concluded at Belgrade.⁽²⁾ From the language held to me by the Emperor and from the tone of the Russian press it would appear that, while His Majesty and the Russian Government have forgotten and forgiven the humiliation which Germany inflicted on them during the Balkan crisis of 1908,⁽³⁾ their feeling of rancour against Austria, and more especially against Count Aehrenthal, shows no sign of abatement. Monsieur Iswolsky has doubtless handed down to his successor a political legacy of profound distrust and dislike of that statesman; and this fact, coupled with the knowledge that the Emperor shares this personal resentment, is likely to prevent Monsieur Sazonow attempting to bring about an Austro-Russian *rapprochement* so long as the foreign policy of the Dual Monarchy is controlled by Count Aehrenthal. Were the latter to disappear from the scene the case might be different, as his retirement would give satisfaction to Russia's wounded vanity.

Germany on the other hand has also reasons of her own for wishing to see a more pliable and subservient Minister installed at the Ballplatz, and from the Chancellor's recent declarations on German policy in the Near East⁽⁴⁾ and from the violent articles published in the Russian press it would almost seem that the two Governments had agreed to open a campaign against His Excellency for the purpose of discrediting him and encompassing his fall. Should these efforts be crowned with success, the way would be prepared for supplementing the Russo-German Agreement respecting Persia and the Bagdad Railway by some kind of an understanding between Austria and Russia with regard to the Balkans. Were this latter to take the form which Monsieur Iswolsky desired to give to the abortive conversations which took place between St. Petersburg and Vienna last spring, and were

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe. It was sent to Paris; to Berlin; to Vienna; to St. Petersburg; to Constantinople; to Tehran. A copy was sent to the India Office.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (I), p. 95, No. 87, note ⁽¹⁾. Sir G. Buchanan's despatch (No. 495), D. December 24, 1910, R. January 2, 1911, is not reproduced, as it merely summarized the press article. (F.O. 371/1046. 47/47/11/3.)]

⁽³⁾ [This subject is dealt with in *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. V.]

⁽⁴⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 578, No. 620, and note ⁽⁵⁾.]

the other Powers consequently to be invited to subscribe to its provisions, it might serve as a useful instrument for the maintenance of peace in the Near East. Were it however, as is not impossible, to be in the nature of a secret agreement between the two Cabinets, of which Germany as Austria's ally would alone have cognisance, it might seriously affect the value of the Triple Entente as a counterpoise to Austro-German ascendancy in Europe.

At the present moment both the Emperor and His Government are, I believe, sincerely anxious to adhere loyally to their alliance with France and to their understanding with England; but the course which the present negotiations with Germany have taken leads me to fear that when it is a question of securing satisfaction for some particular or immediate interest, Russia may drift dangerously far into German waters. Nor must it be forgotten that the reactionary party in Russia inclines much more towards Germany than towards England, while there are not wanting those who are in favour of being on the side of the big battalions.

Monsieur Sazonow's desire to prevent Germany poaching in the Russian preserves in north Persia accounts for the haste with which he has made proposals respecting Persia and the Bagdad Railway without consulting our views or wishes. He was, it is true, not bound to do so by the terms of the Anglo-Russian Agreement,⁽⁵⁾ but he has, none the less, laid himself open to the reproach of not having observed the spirit of the tacit understanding, according to which no arrangement was to be concluded with Germany respecting the Bagdad Railway by any one of the parties to the Triple Entente, until the other two had also come to terms with her. The temptation to secure favourable conditions with regard to north Persia was too strong for him; and he either drafted or accepted the text of the 1st Article of the Draft Agreement⁽⁶⁾ without reflecting on the difficulties which it might occasion in the future. As an instance of his rather careless habit of doing business, I may mention that though I informed him the day before my Audience with the Emperor⁽⁷⁾ of the general purport of the language which I proposed to hold to His Majesty, he never told me till afterwards that he had not yet submitted the Draft Agreement to His Majesty. I was naturally, therefore, under the impression that such an important State document could not have been submitted to the German Government without the Emperor's express sanction. Fortunately, however, I did not make any reference to it in the course of my conversation with His Majesty; but had I unwittingly done so, it would have been interesting to have heard what the Emperor would have said on learning that I was better acquainted than Himself with the details of the secret negotiations which his Foreign Minister was conducting with the German Government.

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

MINUTES.

The moral of this interesting but disquieting despatch appears to be that we should lose very greatly by the disappearance of Count Aehrenthal though we are clearly powerless to prevent his fall.

Sir F. Cartwright appears to consider (see his telegram received this morning)⁽⁸⁾ that his position is not greatly shaken by the Vasitch incident but it seems strange to me that a Minister should be able to remain in office who is convicted of being either a knave who uses forged documents to accomplish his purpose or a fool who is unable to detect a very obvious fraud.

⁽⁵⁾ [*v. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IV, pp. 618-20, *App. I.*]

⁽⁶⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 574-5, No. 618, *encl.*]

⁽⁷⁾ [Sir G. Buchanan gave a detailed account of his audience with the Czar in his despatch (No. 488) of December 15. *v. supra*, pp. 583-4, No. 623.]

⁽⁸⁾ [Sir F. Cartwright's telegram (No. 1A) of January 1, 1911, D. 8.30 P.M., R. 10 P.M. (F.O. 371/1046. 7/7/11/3), is not reproduced as the contents are sufficiently indicated above. *cp. also* Sir F. Cartwright's private letter of January 4, 1911. *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (I), pp. 243-5, No. 207.]

Sir G. Buchanan considers that the supersession of Count Aehrenthal might result in an Austro-Russian agreement respecting the Balkans which might, if it took a certain form, seriously weaken the Triple Entente.

This is only a speculation but the new attitude of the Russian Gov[ernmen]t towards Germany is a reality and not an agreeable one for us notwithstanding the good dispositions of the Emperor and M. Sazonoff's own protestations (which are doubtless quite sincere as far as they go).

The particular point now at issue (the draft Russo-German agreement about the Bagdad Railway and Persia) is more fully dealt with in another despatch (49)(⁹) and it cannot be said that even now M. Sazonoff's attitude is satisfactory.

H. N.

Jan[uary] 2, 1911.

Interesting speculations.

L. M.

A. N.

These despatches from Sir G. Buchanan are both interesting and useful.

E. G.

(⁹) [i.e. immediately succeeding document.]

No. 681.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.(¹)

F.O. 371/1287.

49/48/11/44.

(No. 497.) Secret.

St. Petersburg, D. December 26, 1910.

Sir,

R. January 2, 1911.

In the course of a conversation which I had with the Minister for Foreign Affairs this afternoon, I reverted to the subject of the Draft Agreement(²) which he had submitted to the German Government respecting Persia and the Bagdad Railway. I said that His Excellency would no doubt already have learnt from Count Benckendorff that its first article, if read by any one unacquainted with the explanations which he had given, could only in your opinion imply that Russia was consenting to abandon all opposition to the realisation of the whole Bagdad Railway project and that the limited construction which he was putting on it gave a quite new interpretation to the recognised meaning of the term Bagdad Railway. If moreover His Excellency's view as to the meaning of Article I was correct, it was difficult to see what advantages Germany would gain under the Draft Agreement in return for the concessions which she was making to Russia in north Persia. I also repeated to Monsieur Sazonow what you, Sir, had told Count Benckendorff, that should His Majesty's Government ever find that a satisfactory arrangement could be made with Germany respecting the Gulf section, they would not confirm it until Russia and France had been able to make such arrangements with Germany as suited their respective interests, and that although negotiations might proceed separately, no settlement ought to be arrived at until all three Governments were satisfied.(³)

Monsieur Sazonow did not take up this last point except to explain that he had been obliged to telegraph to Count Benckendorff, instructing him to correct the statement which His Excellency had made to you as to the agreement respecting

(¹) [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe. It was sent to Paris; to Berlin; to Constantinople; to Tehran. Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations; to the Committee of Imperial Defence.]

(²) [*v. supra*, pp. 574-5, No. 618, *encl.*]

(³) [*v. supra*, pp. 581-2, No. 621, where this conversation between Sir Edward Grey and Count Benckendorff is reported. *cp. also Siebert*, pp. 527-8, where Count Benckendorff said that he declared that five Governments, England, France, Germany, Russia and Turkey, must be satisfied.]

the linking up of the two Railway Systems being contingent on the conclusion by His Majesty's Government of a satisfactory understanding with Germany respecting the Gulf section. As regarded however the wording of Article I, he assured me that it had never struck him that it could bear any other interpretation than that which he had intended to give to it and that, had he not thought so, he would certainly have worded it differently. On my enquiring whether he proposed to obtain from the German Government an assurance in writing that the right to construct the line from Sadijeh to Khanikin should be ceded to Russia in the event of Great Britain obtaining the control over the Gulf section, Monsieur Sazonow said that he had no such intention. During the discussions which had taken place at Berlin the two questions of the Bagdad Railway—by which he meant the Railway up to Bagdad—and the whole Bagdad Railway system had been treated separately. Russia had engaged not to oppose the realisation of the Railway up to Bagdad and had consented to the linking up of this Railway with the future North Persian Railway system by a line running from Sadijeh to Khanikin, because she was powerless to prevent the realisation of either of these two schemes. Before the Potsdam interview the relations between the two Governments had been very strained and he had lived in daily dread of receiving the news that Germany had obtained from the Persian Government the concessions for the Khanikin-Teheran line. The counter-concessions which he had extracted from Germany were of the greatest importance to Russia; while the engagements which the latter had taken would be a moral satisfaction to German public opinion and would give German trade an access to the Persian markets.⁽⁴⁾ Great Britain had nothing whatever to fear from the terms of the first Article. The position of the Russian Government with regard to any lines running from Bagdad either to the Gulf or to the Mediterranean would be exactly the same as it was before that Article had been drafted. As he had told me already, he did not for one moment believe that Germany could ever construct a line to the Gulf without our assistance; but if the worst came to the worst, and Russia had to give us her support, the only result would be a possible "row" between the Russian and the German Governments.

I observed that even in my own small experience I had seen cases where considerable complications had ensued in consequence of a Treaty being so loosely worded that either party to it could interpret it in the sense most favourable to its interests. I understood from what he had told me at our first interview that he expected that the German Government would not accept the Draft Agreement as it stood. If therefore they had the right to introduce amendments into it, I could not see why the Russian Government was debarred from altering the text of the first Article so as to leave no doubt as to its meaning, more especially as His Excellency had already clearly explained to them what was meant by the term "Bagdad Railway." Monsieur Sazonow first contended that it was now too late to do this; but on my pressing the point later on in our conversation His Excellency promised to see whether he could get the words "jusqu'à" inserted before Bagdad. He did not however take any positive engagements to this effect; and the fulfilment of his promise will no doubt depend on the reception which may be accorded to such a suggestion at Berlin.

His Excellency has so far received no communication from the German Government on the subject of the Draft Agreement.

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

MINUTES.

Sir G. Buchanan's remark in the passage marked on page 1 of this despatch appears to me most appropriate and much to the point.

⁽⁴⁾ [Unsigned marginal note: "In another place M. Sazonoff says that German trade would be penalised by heavy rates and would gain nothing. These two statements cannot be reconciled." *cp.* immediately succeeding document.]

It is hard to see how M. Sazonoff failed to perceive the very obvious sense of Art[icle] 1 and how he can consider that the meaning which he attaches to it is the natural one.

Russia may be unable to prevent Germany from joining Sadije to Khanikin by a line but I cannot help thinking that Great Britain and Russia between them would be perfectly able to prevent the Persian Gov[ernmen]t from giving to Germany a concession to build one from Khanikin to Tehran. After the warning which they have received the Persian Gov[ernmen]t would not dare to do this nor do I believe that Germany would think it prudent to make the request. This is what M. Sazonoff dreads and this fear has induced him to take the course which he has adopted.

It is doubtless true that the concessions which he has received in return are "of the greatest importance to Russia"; but he has not thought of our interests and his policy has been a poor return for our attitude. He is even now very reluctant to have the meaning which he attaches to Art[icle] 1 made clear.

Sir G. Buchanan has returned to the charge several times on this subject and no doubt further persistency at present would annoy M. Sazonoff. It might be better therefore not to instruct Sir G. Buchanan to say any more at present, but when the German Gov[ernmen]t reply it will presumably be clear what meaning they attach to Art[icle] 1, and M. Sazonoff can hardly refuse to insist on the correction of a misunderstanding if one is found to exist. (I assume that H[is] E[xc]cellency will show the German answer to Sir G. Buchanan.)

Meanwhile,

? Approve Sir G. Buchanan's language.

H. N.

Jan[uary] 2, 1911.

E. A. C.

Jan[uary] 6.

R. P. M.

Approve. I suppose Sir G. Buchanan will not again return to the charge, otherwise a hint might be given to him privately not to overpress M. Sazonow. He may end by wearying him.

L. M.

I have given him already a private hint as to not unduly pressing M. Sazonow on this point. We have sufficiently impressed on him the reading which would naturally be given to Art[icle] 1.

A. N.

I agree, but it is well that Sir G. Buchanan has spoken hitherto as he did and he should be approved.⁽⁵⁾

E. G.

⁽⁵⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's despatch (No. 6) of January 9, 1911, approved Sir G. Buchanan's language. (F.O. 371/1237. 49/48/11/44.)]

No. 632.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1176.

50/1/11/44.

(No. 498.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, D. December 26, 1910.

R. January 2, 1911.

On my entering Monsieur Sazonow's reception room this afternoon Monsieur Timiriazeff was just leaving it; and His Excellency informed me that he had come to report to him the results of his visit to London with regard to the trans-Persian Railway scheme.

Monsieur Timiriazeff had, Monsieur Sazonow said, been very well satisfied with the conversations which he had with various leading politicians and financiers. He had gathered, however, that it was desired in England that the Company should be a purely Anglo-Russian one and that the projected railway should not pass through Tehran, for fear lest the Bagdad Railway should eventually be linked with

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King; and as having been seen at Berlin. It was sent to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe; to Berlin; to Constantinople; to Paris; to Tehran. Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations; to the Committee of Imperial Defence.]

[8959]

it, when the Sadijeh-Khanikin and the Khanikin-Teheran lines had been built. As regarded the first of these two points Monsieur Sazonow remarked that it would, he thought, be almost impossible to prevent the participation of the French in the enterprise and that it would be very difficult to obtain the necessary concession from the Persian Government were a proposal to be put forward that the British and Russian Government should have the control of the Railway in their respective spheres of influence in Persia. The Persian Government would at once suspect that the two Governments were planning a sort of *condominium* in Persia and would cite the case of Manchuria, where the Railway was controlled by Russia in the north and by Japan in the south.

I told His Excellency that I had no official information as to the views of His Majesty's Government with regard to the details of the scheme, but I repeated to him the language which you had held to Count Benckendorff as reported in your despatch No. 314 Secret of the 15th instant,⁽²⁾ respecting its strategical bearings and the possible danger of its serving as a means of transport for Turkish troops to the Indian frontier.

Monsieur Sazonow replied that he quite understood the reasons which might lead public opinion in India to view the project with an unfavourable eye, but that he could not see that there were any possible grounds for fearing the second contingency to which you had drawn attention. Even when the Sadijeh-Khanikin and the Khanikin-Teheran Railways were built, it would be impossible for the Turks to use the latter line for such a purpose, as it would be virtually under Russian control, while an international railway like the trans-Persian one would be equally closed to them. If, however, His Majesty's Government desired, for either strategical or economical reasons, that the Railway should not touch Teheran, it would be always possible to arrange that it should run to the north of that town; though this again might lead to difficulties with the Persian Government, who would naturally wish that the Railway should pass through the capital. But in whatever way this question might be settled, it was in his opinion essential that the Railway should be built with the least possible delay, as were it once in working order, it was quite possible that the Sadijeh-Khanikin-Teheran lines might never be constructed.

On my observing that there seemed to be considerable opposition to the project in certain quarters in Russia, Monsieur Sazonow said that this was quite true. The Moscow merchants wished to keep the trade in north Persia in their own hands and were afraid of German competition; but owing to the dues imposed on goods passing in transit through the Caucasus, German trade with Persia by this route would always be heavily handicapped. Germany had made repeated representations on the subject of these dues, but the Russian Government had no intention of making any concessions with regard to them. They would therefore continue to be enforced on all goods destined for the Persian market, but not on those passing in transit to India. His Excellency admitted however that owing to the existence of these dues the Germans would naturally endeavour to introduce their goods into Persia by way of Bagdad; and this fact somewhat weakens his argument that, were the trans-Persian Railway to be constructed without delay, the Germans might have to renounce the idea of linking the Bagdad Railway with the North Persian Railway System.

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

P.S. The Minister of Finance, whom I have seen since writing the above, tells me that the trans-Persian Railway scheme is to come before the Council of Ministers this week. His Excellency expressed himself strongly in its favour. He spoke slightly of the opposition raised by the Moscow merchants, and said that their fears that the proposed Railway would threaten their hold on the Persian

(2) [*v. supra*, pp 581-2, No. 621.]

market by facilitating the importation of German goods were groundless. His Excellency added that the real danger of German competition in Persia lay on the side of the Bagdad Railway.

G. W. B.

MINUTES.

The strategical considerations are primarily for the Gov[ernmen]t of India to consider and for the Committee of Defence, but the fact that the Tehran-Khanikin line will be Russian would no doubt affect the position to some extent

There is no reason why French capital should not be admitted but, if French capital is admitted, it will be impossible to exclude German capital, and M. Sazonow has probably already undertaken to include it! So long as the Anglo-Russian character and control of the line is secured and it is not internationalized, I do not see any great harm in this but we should be most careful not to allow our attitude to be known at this stage and, if we admit French and German capital, to get something adequate in return for the concession. All these points must be most carefully considered.

M. Sazonow's willingness that the line should not touch at Tehran is satisfactory, as it appears to prove that he does not consider that he has conceded to Germany the right to connect the Bagdad Line with the Trans-Persian line. This is important, if a bargain is to be struck.

L. M.

H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] have expressed no views or opinions, and naturally will not do so till the question has been thoroughly examined by the Cabinet, Committee of Defence and the various Dep[artmen]ts. There is no doubt that if the Trans-Persian line is constructed a junction with the Bagdad line will be insisted upon by the German Gov[ernmen]t and M. Sazonow will be held to the letter of his agreement whatever his own views as to the interpretation of that agreement may be. There is plenty of time ahead of us to examine the detail question of participation of capital, &c.

A. N.

I have not stipulated that the railway should avoid Teheran or be confined to British and Russian capital. What is essential is that it should be British controlled and managed in our sphere of interest.

The Russians will never be able to maintain differential dues on goods from Germany to Persia.

E. G.

No. 633.

Lord Knollys to Sir A. Nicolson.

F.O. 371/1016.

46584/36821/10/44A.

My dear Nicolson,

Sandringham, Norfolk, December 29, 1910.

The King desires me to thank you for your letter and the copy of Buchanan's telegram respecting the 1st Article,⁽¹⁾ and he agrees with you in thinking that if the words "jusqu'à Bagdad" are added, the article will then be made clear.⁽²⁾

Y[ou]rs ever,

KNOLLYS.

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 588-9, No. 629.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 579, No. 620, note (?).]

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Private.⁽²⁾

My dear Sir Edward,

St. Petersburg, December 29, 1910.

I am much obliged to you for letting me know that the Emperor attaches such importance to the trans-Persian Railway.⁽³⁾

I had a conversation with Sazonow on the subject of the Railway a few days ago and repeated to him what you had told Benckendorff.⁽⁴⁾ He quite understands that His Majesty's Government must examine the question from the strategic point of view; but does not think that there are the slightest grounds for fearing that it could, under any circumstances, serve for the transport of Turkish troops to the Indian frontier.

Timiriazeff, who has just returned from London, had told him that the view generally held there was that the Railway should be a purely Anglo-Russian concern and that we would prefer that it should not touch Teheran, for fear of its being eventually linked up with the Bagdad Railway. Sazonow is of opinion that it would be impossible for us to keep the French out of the enterprise and that further it would be advisable that the Railway should have an international character, rather than that it should be under the control of the British and Russian Governments in their respective spheres of interest in Persia. Were we to try and establish it on the latter basis, he thinks that the Persians might refuse us the concession altogether, for fear of our inaugurating some sort of co-dominium like that exercised by Russia and Japan with regard to the Manchurian Railway. I gathered from the conversation which I had with you before leaving London that you rather favoured the idea of our having the control of the Railway from Kerman to India and of allowing Russia to control it in the north; but I did not mention this to Sazonow. I confess that I am almost converted to his way of thinking, as apart from the difficulties which the Persians are likely to raise to an Anglo-Russian control, a Railway run by an international Company in which we were largely represented seems to me to offer less of a menace to India than one of which the north Persian section was under the absolute control of Russia.

As regards the question of whether the Railway should avoid Teheran, Sazonow said that if we so wished it, it might be possible to deflect the line in such a way that it would run to the north of that town. This, however, might cause difficulties with the Persians, who would probably insist on the Railway passing through the capital.

I think that it would be very difficult for us to oppose the wishes of the Persians on this point, and from what I am told the country to the north of Teheran is so mountainous that it would add considerably to the cost of the line, were it to be deflected in that direction.

Sincerely yours,

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

(1) [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to Sir A. Nicolson and to Lord Crewe.]

(2) [Grey MSS., Vol. 34.]

(3) [The reference is to Sir Edward Grey's private letter to Sir G. Buchanan of December 15, 1910. It is not reproduced as it adds nothing of importance to information given elsewhere. Grey MSS., Vol. 34.]

(4) [*v. supra*, pp. 581-2, No. 621.]

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir A. Nicolson.⁽¹⁾

Private.⁽²⁾

My dear Nicolson,

St. Petersburg, December 29, 1910.

Many thanks for writing me such a long letter by last bag.⁽³⁾

You will have seen from a telegram which I sent on Monday⁽⁴⁾ that I again attacked Sazonow on the subject of the Draft Agreement.⁽⁵⁾ I repeated to him the language which you and Sir Edward had held to Benckendorff with regard to it and emphasised the view, which Sir Edward takes, that though separate negotiations may be concluded with Germany by any one of the three Governments, no definite arrangement ought to be made until the claims of all three are satisfied.

Sazonow went over the whole ground again, assuring me that it had never occurred to him that the term Bagdad Railway, employed in the first Article, could when taken in conjunction with the second Article bear any other interpretation than the one which he had given it. He would otherwise have certainly altered the wording. He could not, he said, see why it should cause us any uneasiness. The position of Russia would be exactly the same as before as regarded the lines to the Gulf and the Mediterranean, and the only possible inconvenience that could arise would be "a row" between the German and Russian Governments, should the former dispute the latter's right to give us their support later on. I asked him whether he was going to be satisfied with the verbal promise which he had apparently received, that Russia was to construct the Sadijeh-Khanikin line in the event of our demands respecting the Gulf section being satisfied, or whether he intended to get such an assurance in writing.

He replied that he had no such intention; that the question of what he called the Bagdad Railway—viz. the Railway up to Bagdad—had been treated at Potsdam quite separately from that of the rest of the Bagdad Railway system; and that Germany could never build the Gulf section by herself, as we could always prevent her doing so. From what he had told them at Potsdam the German Government must be aware that the Draft Agreement had only reference to the Railway up to Bagdad. I said that I thought complications were sure to arise were an Agreement to be signed, which was so loosely worded that it could be interpreted in two different senses by each of the contracting parties, and that as Germany was free to propose alterations in it, I could not see why he had not the right to insert a word or two in the first Article so as to render its meaning clear, more especially as he had already explained to the Germans what he had meant to convey by the term "Bagdad Railway." At first he rather jibbed at the idea; but on my pressing him again later on, he promised to try to get the word "jusqu'à" inserted before Bagdad. I am afraid that we cannot regard this as an actual engagement, and if Kiderlen tries to hold him to the original text, which was probably drafted in the German Foreign Office, Sazonow is too keen to get the Agreement signed to insist on any such amendment.

He would not be drawn into a discussion as to whether any one of the three Governments could definitely conclude an arrangement before the other two had obtained satisfaction from Germany, as I suppose he has nothing to add to the explanations which he gave to O'Beirne before he went to Potsdam. I was, however, on the whole, more satisfied with this last conversation than with my previous ones,

⁽¹⁾ [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe. The endorsement is initialled by Sir Edward Grey.]

⁽²⁾ [Carnock MSS., Vol. II of 1910.]

⁽³⁾ [Sir A. Nicolson's letter of December 20, 1910, discussed again his conversation with Count Benckendorff on December 19. *cp. supra*, p. 579, No. 620, *note* (7). It is not reproduced as it gave no further information. Carnock MSS., Vol. II of 1910.]

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 588-9, No. 629.]

⁽⁵⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 574-5, No. 618, *encl.*]

as he was very frank and outspoken and is, I think, animated by the best intentions towards us. He is not, however, a match for Kiderlen and there is always a danger that, now that these intimate conversations have been opened between Petersburg and Berlin, he may be carried further than he intends to go.

I have in a secret despatch given my general impressions on the present political situation and on the possibility of the Russo-German Agreement being supplemented by an Austro-Russian understanding, should Aehrenthal quit office.^(*) Louis, with whom I had a long conversation the other day, shares the impression, which the Emperor's language at my Audience and the general tone of the Russian press have made on me, that the German and Russian Governments are working together to discredit Aehrenthal and that his fall would be followed by an Austro-Russian *rapprochement*. I personally think that this will render it much more difficult for us to maintain our present understanding with Russia. It was the tension existing between her and Austria and Germany that threw Russia into our arms; and should that tension be replaced by intimate relations with the two neighbouring Empires, our interests are bound to suffer. It is very difficult to see what we can do to attach Russia more closely to us, unless it were possible to broaden the basis of our present understanding with her. The Emperor and Stolypin both spoke to me of the Panislamic movement with which we might both be confronted one day, and were this movement really to take a concrete shape, it might form the object of a further agreement, which might comprise Turkey and the Near East as well as our respective possessions in Asia. But this danger may after all be a purely chimerical one and meanwhile we may see Russia drifting more and more towards Germany. I hope that I am unnecessarily pessimistic; but it is a contingency which we have got to guard against.

What, however, I do think is necessary is to keep Russia informed of the character of any further conversations which we may have with the German Government. If we conceal them from her, she is sure to get a garbled version of them from Kiderlen, and she may suspect us of acting behind her back. I cannot help thinking that Sazonow had some such suspicion, when he raised the question of Russia's right to construct the Sadijeh-Khanikin line on his arrival at Berlin.

I may have an opportunity of speaking to the Emperor on the first of January (old style) and perhaps at the Ceremony of the Blessing of the Waters, which I am told is to be held at the Winter Palace this year. If therefore there is anything which Sir Edward would like me to say to him, please let me know.

Ever yours,

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

(*) [*v. supra*, pp. 589-90, No. 630.]

No. 636.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1176.

1/1/11/44.

Tel. (No. 1.)

Trans-Persian Railway.

My despatch No. 498.⁽²⁾

Minister for Foreign Affairs has expressed to me great satisfaction at learning through the Russian consul-general at Calcutta that the Government of India will raise no objections.

St. Petersburg, January 1, 1911.

D. 8·7 P.M.

R. 9·14 P.M.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram is endorsed as having been sent to the King.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 593-5, No. 632.]

His Excellency told me in confidence, on the question being debated in the Council of Ministers, all the Ministers spoke in favour of the scheme with the exception of Minister of Commerce, who represented the views of Russian merchants, but that his arguments were successfully refuted by the Minister of Finance. A representative committee, of which Minister for Foreign Affairs will be a member, will now examine whole scheme, and the decision of Russian Government will be communicated to us in about one month.

No. 637.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir G. Buchanan.

Private.⁽¹⁾

My dear Buchanan:—

Foreign Office, January 3, 1911.

Many thanks for your letter, which gives a very clear account of the situation in Petersburg.⁽²⁾ The secret despatch to which you allude has not yet reached me; but I suppose I shall receive it either to-morrow or next day.⁽³⁾ I think that we may almost take it for granted that Sazonow will be held by Germany to the strict letter of his agreement,⁽⁴⁾ and that the result will be that Russia will be unable to intervene in any way when the lines to the Gulf and the Mediterranean are being discussed. Sazonow says that, if Germany disputes the right of Russia to support us, the only inconvenience would be a row between the two countries. Such a row, if it occurred, would be most inconvenient, and would not benefit us in the slightest degree. Moreover I have little doubt that, if such differences did occur, Sazonow would be worsted in the encounter. I think it would be wiser—though I have not yet had Sir Edward Grey's opinion—not to trouble Sazonow any more for the present on the subject, and we must be prepared for having to arrange our affairs alone with Germany whenever the latter Power approaches us again in regard to the matter. Of course if you are able to persuade Sazonow to insert the words "up to" in Article 1, so much the better; but personally I think that we have hustled him quite sufficiently for the moment. There is no doubt that he has blundered, and we must hope that he will gain experience by his error, and be more cautious in the future. With regard to your telegram No. 1⁽⁵⁾ stating that the Russian Government had learned from their Consul General in Calcutta that the Government of India had given their consent to the Trans-Persian Railway, neither the India Office nor ourselves have received any confirmation of this report. I can hardly believe it possible that the Indian Government should have come so speedily to a decision. I must leave it to you whether you should or should not mention to Sazonow that the reports received from his Consul General have not been corroborated by anything that we have received from India. It might perhaps be a little discouraging to him were you to contradict the information which he has received, and which has apparently given him such satisfaction; but you are the best judge as to whether it will be wise to leave him under what I consider to be a false impression. The Trans-Persian Railway question has not moved at all here during the holidays, but, when the Cabinet reassembles this month, the matter will, I hope, be thoroughly gone into. It will have to be examined by the Military authorities as well as by the Committee for Imperial Defence, and I do not imagine that we shall be in a position to give any decided opinion for some time to come.

⁽¹⁾ [Carnock MSS., Vol. I of 1911.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 597–8, No. 635.]

⁽³⁾ [The despatch referred to is No. 496 of December 26. *v. supra*, pp. 589–90, No. 630. It was received in London on January 2, 1911.]

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 574–5, No. 618, *encl.*]

⁽⁵⁾ [*v. immediately preceding document.*]

What you say as to the desire of Germany and Russia to discredit Aehrenthal is curious. Cartwright, in a recent private letter which I received from him, alluded to the same intention;(*) but he stated that the Russian Ambassador at Vienna had declined to associate himself with his German colleague in the campaign against Aehrenthal. You will have seen a telegram from Cartwright giving his views as to the position of Aehrenthal(†) and I should think that, if the present indisposition of the Austrian Emperor develops into something more serious, it is quite possible that Aehrenthal's numerous enemies in Vienna will be encouraged to become still more active in compassing his overthrow. There can be little doubt that his disappearance would bring about more friendly relations between Austria and Russia, but I do not think that this fact in itself would necessarily weaken our understanding with Russia. Various causes other than the tension between Russia and Austria forced Isvolsky to co-operate with us. It is quite true that these causes were in a great measure transitory and personal, and their effect may very possibly have passed away by now. I have always held that our understanding could not be relied upon to enjoy a very prolonged life, although I think that the Emperor will always remain loyal—at any rate to the letter of it. There are, however, dangers ahead which I think may modify his present hearty sympathy with us. If our affairs at home develop in a direction which the Emperor may consider to be ultra-democratic and as indicating instability in our internal situation, he will most probably be disposed to seek comfort in more conservative quarters. There are many around him who strongly urge him to take such a course, and I am not sure that some of our friends in the Russian Cabinet would be so eager in supporting our understanding if they thought that we were embarking on an advanced political programme at home.

You will no doubt have noticed the activity which Germany is displaying—in both the official and ordinary press—in endeavouring to persuade the world that her relations both with England and Russia have become of the most intimate nature. She has not lost an opportunity of influencing in the same direction certain sections of the Press here, and the significant manner in which France has been left out of account causes considerable uneasiness in Paris. I do not think that the French question our loyalty, but they have serious searchings of heart as to whether Sazonow has not gone even further than we are aware of. Barrère from Rome reports in that sense, and Dr. Dillon, with his usual dogmatic positiveness, assured me the other day that he knew for a fact that some very far-reaching arrangements had been concluded at Potsdam, of which we were blissfully unconscious. I do not attach great weight to Dillon's information; but there is no doubt a feeling of uneasiness among French diplomatists and in the governing classes, and it is possible that they may have grounds for their apprehensions. I think it cannot be denied that efforts will be made in some form or another to revive the alliance of the three Emperors. Possibly they may offer us admittance on conditions, or else leave us alone and compel France to apply for entrance, owing to the sheer weight which she will find arrayed against her. On the other hand, we have the very emphatic declarations of Isvolsky, when he presented his Letters to the President, that it was the firm determination of Russia to maintain the French Alliance, and we have also the positive assurances of both the Emperor and Sazonow to you. The danger may not be imminent, but it is not one which can be left entirely out of consideration. It would no doubt be of advantage if we could broaden the basis of our understanding with Russia; but I do not quite see how we can utilize the risks of the Pan-Islamic movement. There is no doubt that the Russians are becoming uneasy in regard to this movement, and Benckendorff left with me the other day a series of questions, which I have passed on to the India Office, as to what steps we were taking in India towards controlling and influencing the instruction which was given in our Moslem schools. When I was in Russia, I

(*) [*cp. supra*, pp. 587–8, No. 627.]

(†) [*cp. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (I), pp. 239–40, No. 205.]

ascertained that the Young Turks were carrying on a fairly active propaganda in the South of Russia and in Turkestan, and it is possible that they may extend their activity to India. We have to proceed very cautiously in our dealings with the present régime at Constantinople and, were we to alienate or irritate "the Young Turks" we should certainly soon feel the effects in Egypt at any rate. The question of our attitude in future towards the Young Turkish régime, should it show signs of developing an aggressive attitude, is one which has by no means been lost sight of here, and before long I hope that we shall be able to come to some conclusion on the subject.

I do not think there is anything we can suggest which, for the moment, you could usefully say to the Emperor and, indeed, on the occasions to which you refer, a suitable opportunity would scarcely present itself, as it is difficult either at the New Year or at the Blessing of the Waters to hold any political conversation with him. The language which you have held, both to the Emperor and to Sazonow, has been highly approved here, and we feel sure that you will do all in your power to keep on terms as friendly as possible with both of them. If you get an opportunity, you might impress on Sazonow that certain articles which have recently appeared, both in the "Daily News" and the "Nation,"⁽⁸⁾ in no-wise represent the views of the Government, and that neither paper enjoys the reputation which, for some reason or another, appears to be attributed to it abroad. The "Daily News" article created a certain sensation in France, and was naturally joyfully welcomed and cordially approved of both in Germany and Austria. The Russian Government should have no shadow of doubt as to the loyalty and friendliness of our feelings towards them.

[Yours, &c.
A. NICOLSON.]

P.S. Since writing the above I hear that Mallet spoke to the Russian Secretary as to the news from the Russian Consul General at Calcutta. Benckendorff tells me that all that the latter reported was that Hardinge had said that his views were identical with those of Sir Edward, i.e., in favour of the line in principle—and the Consul General added that he himself believed that there would be no opposition from military circles in India. I daresay it would, therefore, be of no use your saying anything to Sazonoff on the subject.

⁽⁸⁾ [An article appeared in the *Daily News* of December 29, 1910, and there was one in *The Nation* of December 17, 1910. Further articles on the same subject appeared in the *Daily News* of December 30, and December 31, 1910.]

No. 638.

Extract from the "Evening Times" of January 6, 1911.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

769/48/11/44.

RUSSIA'S DEAL WITH GERMANY: FULL OFFICIAL TEXT OF THE NEW PROPOSAL.

Future of Persia.

Turkey gives Special Rewards for the Recent Loan.

Our St. Petersburg correspondent sends us to-day one of the most important and interesting messages which has been published for a long time—it is the official text of the Russian proposal to Germany with regard to Persia.

⁽¹⁾ [This extract is taken from the *Confidential Print* as no original text can be traced.]

This agreement, which was arrived at at a recent conference at Potsdam between the Russian and German Foreign Ministers, puts in an official form Germany's attitude with regard to that country; it also indicates that Russia at last accepts German railway predominance in Turkey in Asia, and, unless there are important secret reserves, shows that Russia has thrown over her allies in the Triple *Entente*—Great Britain and France—for it has been always understood that if the Czar's Government made any deal with Germany on the subject it would only do so—

1. If Great Britain was conceded the right of building the railway from Bagdad to the Persian Gulf; and
2. If France secured the right to build a line from Homs, the terminus of the French line in Palestine to Bagdad, thus joining up Mesopotamia and the Mediterranean.

Germany has, moreover, secured very important concessions from Turkey for arranging the last loan.

Here is the message :—

[From our Own Correspondent.]

St. Petersburg, January 5, 1911.

I am now able to send the exact official text of the proposal put forward by Russia to Germany with regard to Persia.

(1.)

The Imperial Russian Government declares itself willing not to oppose the realisation of the Bagdad Railway, and undertakes not to place any obstacle in the way of the participation of foreign capital in the undertaking. It is, of course, understood that no sacrifice of a pecuniary or economic nature will be demanded on the part of Russia.

(2.)

In order to meet the wish of the German Government to connect the Bagdad Railway with the future system of railways in Persia, the Russian Government undertakes to carry out, when this system shall have been constructed, the building of a line to join on the Turco-Persian frontier, the line from Sadijé to Khanikin, when this branch of the Bagdad Railway, as well as the line from Konia to Bagdad, shall have been finished. The Russian Government reserves the right to fix, at its own choice of time, the final route of the line which shall end and join up at Khanikin.

The two Governments will facilitate international traffic on the latter line, and shall avoid all measures which might hinder it, such as the establishment of transit rights or the application of differential treatment.

(3.)

The German Government undertakes on its own part not to construct any railway lines in the zone situate between the Bagdad line and the Russian and Persian frontier to the north of Khanikin, nor to lend its material or diplomatic support to any undertakings of the kind in the zone indicated.

(4.)

The German Government puts on record that it has no political interests in Persia, and will only pursue commercial aims there, recognising, on the other hand, that Russia has special interests in the north of Persia from the political, strategic, and economic points of view. The German Government likewise declares that it has no intention of seeking on its own account, or of supporting on behalf of any

one amenable to its jurisdiction, or of subjects of other nations, any concessions for railways, roads, navigation, and telegraphs, or any other concessions of a territorial nature to the north of a line starting from Kasri-Chirin, passing by Ispahan, Jezd, and Khakh, and ending at the Afghan frontier at the latitude of Ghasik. If the German Government should seek such concessions it would first come to an understanding with the Russian Government.

On the other hand, the Imperial Russian Government will continue to recognise, with regard to German commerce in Persia, the principle of absolute equality of treatment.

The above document is now under consideration by Germany, which may put forward a counter-proposal, although in any case this is not expected seriously to modify the above proposals. In official Russian circles it is held that the document is really Russia's reply to proposals put forward by Germany to the Russian Government in July 1907.⁽²⁾ It seems that the German Foreign Minister has informed the Russian Foreign Office that Germany is quite confident of securing all the resources necessary for the completion of the line as far as Bagdad, and he claims, moreover, to have the support of French capital. This is substantially correct, for although the stock is not negotiable in France, the Ottoman Bank certainly has subscribed 30 per cent. of the capital of the company, and has sold some of its holdings to French capitalists, while the company also possesses a French vice-president and seven French administrators.

Moreover, on the conclusion of the recent Turkish loan the Bagdad Railway Company has secured the following extra privileges from the Turkish Government:—

1. The concession of a branch line from Eregli to Angora.
2. The modification of the first route of the line which now, instead of being constructed straight towards Tel-el-Habesch, will bend to the south towards Aleppo to a point 14 kilom. from that city.
3. The concession of a narrow gauge railway between Aleppo and Alexandretta.
4. The acceptance by Turkey of the German contention according to which the excess of tithes already allocated to the guarantee of other Turkish railways will in future be assigned not only to the section of the Bagdad line as stipulated in the contract dated the 2nd June, 1908,⁽³⁾ viz., from Bulgurlu to El Helif, but to the entirety of the railway from Koniah to Bagdad.

Great stress should be laid on the latter point, because Great Britain has always strenuously objected to the excess being so employed. The Germans have now, however, seemingly carried their point, and Russia has apparently agreed by undertaking "not to place any obstacles in the way of the participation of foreign capital in the undertaking."

MINUTES.

This article deals with two separate questions: 1) The Russo-German draft agreement,⁽⁴⁾ and 2) the privileges granted by Turkey to the Bagdad Railway Company in recognition of German services in connection with the loan made to Turkey last autumn.⁽⁵⁾

Point 1), is dealt with in the minute on Sir G. Buchanan's telegram No. 11 of Jan[uary] 10th. (1131).⁽⁶⁾

⁽²⁾ [*cp. G.P., XXV (I), pp. 135-40.*]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. Gooch & Temperley, Vol. VI, p. 366, No. 265, and note (1).*]

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. supra, pp. 574-5, No. 618, encl.*]

⁽⁵⁾ [References to the Turkish loan occur in *Gooch & Temperley, Vol. VI, p. 527, No. 400, min.*; p. 549, No. 414, *encl. cp. also ibid., Vol. IX (I), p. 217, No. 188.*]

⁽⁶⁾ [Sir G. Buchanan's telegram (No. 11) of January 10, 1911, D. 8.37 P.M., R. 9.30 P.M., conveyed a request from M. Sazonov for information as to the source of the *Evening Times* publication. In Mr. Parker's minute there was the draft of a telegram to Sir G. Buchanan stating that the text of the Draft Agreement published in the *Evening Times* contained information hitherto unknown to His Majesty's Government, and that all efforts would be made to trace the source of this information. The telegram was sent (as No. 9, Secret) on January 11, 1911, D. 2.15 P.M. (F.O. 371/1237. 1131/48/11/44.)]

Point 2), is of great importance, and I would suggest sending the following telegram to Mr. Marling.⁽⁷⁾

"My despatch No. 107 Secret of April 20th, 1910⁽⁸⁾ The *Evening Times* of January 6th states that, in consequence of recent German services in connection with loan, Turkey has granted following privileges to Bagdad R[ai]l[wa]y Company:—

- "i), Branch line from Eregli to Angora. (This seems unlikely as railway communication viâ Eskişehir already exists, and such a concession might be debarred by Black Sea Basin agreement of March 1900.)⁽⁹⁾
- "ii), Modification of main line towards Aleppo.
- "iii), Narrow gauge line from Aleppo to Alexandretta.
- "iv), Excess of tithes may be allotted not merely to line as far as El Helif, as stipulated in contract dated June 1908,⁽¹⁰⁾ but to line as far as Bagdad."

"I should be glad to receive your observations on points i) and iv)."

A. P.

Jan[uary] 11th, 1911.

I think point iv) is very important: the Turks when we wrote F.O. despatch No. 107 of April 20th, 1910,⁽⁸⁾ denied that they had committed themselves

A. P.

R. P. M.

Telegraph as proposed.

L. M.

Send telegram and return for pouch.

A. N.

E. G.

⁽⁷⁾ [This telegram was sent as (No. 11) of January 11, 1911, D. 2.30 P.M. (F.O. 371/1237. 769/48/11/44)]

⁽⁸⁾ [v. *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. VI, pp. 468-72, No 352.]

⁽⁹⁾ [cp. *supra*, p. 575, No. 618, note ⁽¹⁾.]

⁽¹⁰⁾ [cp. *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. VI, p. 366, No. 265, and note ⁽¹⁾.]

No. 639.

Sir E. Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.

Private.⁽¹⁾

My dear Buchanan,

Foreign Office, January 7, 1911.

I have no doubt that the Russians have been acting in good faith with Germany. But as Germany has now got what she wanted from Russia in connection with the Bagdad Railway, Russia—however well disposed to support us—has deprived herself of the lever which she might have used with Germany for this purpose. She has, of course, the consent to the 4% increase in Turkish Customs Dues left as a means of supporting us; and I think that, after what has happened, she is more bound to keep that in reserve.

As regards general policy, I am delighted that Russia should be on the best terms with Germany, so long as that is not allowed to make a breach between her and us.

You may tell M. Sazonow that we have not yet heard any thing from Germany about the Bagdad Railway, though I have heard indirectly through a journalistic source that Germany intends to make proposals.

You may also tell him that, after the Christmas holidays are over and there has been time and opportunity to discuss the question with my colleagues, we shall say something to Germany on the question of armaments and our relations generally.

If Germany really wishes to be on good terms with us, and wishes it without "arrière pensée," and without any desire of impairing our relations with Russia and France, we shall meet her. But I do not intend to enter into any thing which would be a barrier between ourselves and Russia, or France.

⁽¹⁾ [Grey MSS., Vol. 35.]

It is possible that the Germans may propose some political formula to us. In that event, it would be useful to know whether the Russians have arranged in writing any formula between themselves and Germany, and if so, in what terms. I am genuinely desirous of good relations with Germany, but shall not sacrifice the existing friendships with Russia and France.

I do not see why you should not say all this about relations with Germany and about the Bagdad Railway to Sazonow, and the Emperor too, if you have an opportunity; but it must be on the understanding that they observe complete secrecy about any thing which is passing between Germany and ourselves.

A London paper, called the "Evening Times," which I have not seen, has apparently got from St. Petersburg the text of what is passing between Germany and Russia;⁽²⁾ and this means that without great care there is apt to be considerable leakage in Russian circles.

Yours sincerely,
E. GREY.

(²) [v. immediately preceding document]

No. 640.

Sir E. Goschen to Sir A. Nicolson.⁽¹⁾

Private.⁽²⁾

My dear Nicolson,

Berlin, January 7, 1911.

Many thanks for your letter.⁽³⁾ Sazonow may persist in saying that his hands are free and that his interpretation of the agreement is the correct one, but I feel sure from what I read in the Press, inspired and otherwise, that your surmise is correct and that there is every disposition here to hold him strictly to the letter of everything he has written and said.

Cambon is furious with the whole thing. He told me yesterday that officially he took the line that nothing which had occurred at Potsdam or afterwards could disturb the relations between France and Russia, but, he added, "Voulez vous que je vous dise mon opinion? Eh bien! c'est que l'Alliance Franco-Russe est f——!!" But I think he takes too black a view of things, don't you? Pansa told me yesterday that he had asked Zimmermann (acting for Kiderlen) whether the Imperial Gov[ernment]t had received any such note as that foreshadowed in the *Novoe Wremja*. Zimmermann had answered that they had received nothing whatever in writing from the Russian Government and had added that such a note as that to which the "N[ovoe] Wremja" had alluded would be of a far more comprehensive and binding nature than was warranted by the conversations at Potsdam. This is rather a strange utterance considering that nearly every paper in Germany is insisting that the object of the "Novoe Wremja," "Temps" and "Times" Articles was to detract from, and attenuate, the declaration of the Chancellor in the Reichstag.⁽⁴⁾ I presume that Zimmermann meant either that the mention of specific countries like Persia and Turkey carried more weight than a vague and general declaration, or, which is more likely, that the consignment of what had passed between the two Governments to a written note would be premature at the present stage of the negotiations.

(¹) [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe. The endorsement is initialled by Sir Edward Grey.]

(²) [Carnock MSS., Vol. I of 1911.]

(³) [Sir A. Nicolson wrote a private letter to Sir E. Goschen on January 3, 1911. It refers mainly to the position of Count von Aehrenthal, but contains the following reference to the Potsdam agreement: "Though he [M. Sazonov] persists in asserting that his hands are perfectly free and that his interpretation of the agreement is the correct one, I have little doubt that, if the occasion should arise, Germany would hold him strictly to the letter of it." Carnock MSS., Vol. I of 1911.]

(⁴) [*cp. supra*, p. 578, No. 620, and note (⁵).]

Anyhow I think we may take it for granted that Kiderlen's policy is to detach Russia from France and us, and that he has already gone some way towards its realization. He has evidently been too much for Sazonow, and I think that the latter is much mistaken if he thinks he can wriggle out of what he has been brought to say and write. . . .⁽⁵⁾

Yours very sincerely.

W. E. GOSCHEN.

⁽⁵⁾ [The omitted paragraph describes the attitude of the Ottoman Government to the Bagdad Railway.]

No. 641.

Sir F. Cartwright to Sir Edward Grey.

Vienna, January 9, 1911.

F.O. 999/999/11/38.

D. 8.10 P.M.

Tel. (No. 3.)

R. 9 P.M.

M. Doumer, once President of the French Chamber, has arrived here from St. Petersburg, where he saw the Czar. He asserts that His Majesty went out of his way to reassure him with regard to what passed at Potsdam. The Czar was very emphatic as to there being no change in orientation of Russian policy.

No. 642.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 871/1287.

1728/48/11/44.

(No. 11.)

St. Petersburg, D. January 10, 1911.

Sir,

R. January 16, 1911.

In view of the divergent statements which have recently been published in the foreign press respecting the course of the negotiations now proceeding at St. Petersburg for the purpose of incorporating in a diplomatic act the results of the Potsdam conversations, it may perhaps be useful to recapitulate briefly the explanations which have from time to time been given by Monsieur Sazonow with regard to their salient points.

On his return from Berlin Monsieur Sazonow informed Mr. O'Beirne that, while Germany had agreed not to seek for any concessions of a territorial character within the Russian sphere, Russia had undertaken that the Bagdad Railway should eventually be connected at Khanikin with the future north Persian railway system. Russia was, however, to have the right to construct the Sadijeh-Khanikin line in the event of the Gulf section of the Bagdad Railway being granted to Great Britain. His Excellency further communicated to Mr. O'Beirne the assurances which the German Chancellor had given him respecting Germany's future policy in the Near East. At the same time Monsieur Sazonow informed a correspondent of the "Novoe Vremya" of the general tenour of the agreement arrived at with regard to North Persia and the Bagdad Railway, and assured him that no attempt had been made at Potsdam to draw Russia away from her alliance with France and her cordial agreement with England. On my arrival at St. Petersburg a month later, Monsieur Sazonow communicated to me the text of the Draft Agreement which he had just submitted to Count Pourtalès, according to the first article of which Russia engages not to oppose the realisation of the Bagdad Railway.⁽²⁾ This engagement, His Excellency subsequently explained, had only reference to the Railway

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe. It was sent to Paris; to Berlin; to Constantinople; to Tehran. A copy was sent to the India Office.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 574-5, No. 618, *encl.*]

as far as Bagdad and not to the whole Railway system, inclusive of the Gulf section and its other branches.

On the 18th of December I drew His Excellency's attention to the statement made by the German Chancellor in the Reichstag a few days previously,⁽³⁾ that an engagement had been taken to the effect that neither of the two Governments would join a combination that might be in any way directed against the other. His Excellency thereupon proceeded to explain that assurances had been exchanged between him and the German Chancellor to the effect that neither Government had the slightest desire to detach the other from the particular combination of Powers with which it was associated, and that neither of these respective combinations contained any point that was directed against the other. He further informed the French Ambassador on the same day that, though the text of the Chancellor's statement had not been drafted in concert with him, it had been previously submitted to him by the German Ambassador, and that he had raised no objections to its terms.

On the 31st of December the "Novoe Vremya" announced that the Russian Government were about to send a note to the German Government in reply to the enquiries which the latter had addressed to them after the conclusion of the Anglo-Russian Agreement respecting their future attitude towards German interests in the Middle East. This note, the "Novoe Vremya" declared, would state that the two Governments had agreed not to take any part in any new combination "with regard to Asiatic affairs" which might be directed against the other. On my questioning Monsieur Sazonow as to the truth of this statement, His Excellency explained that the correspondent of the "Novoe Vremya" had misrepresented what had been told him at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs respecting the negotiations with Germany, and that the Draft Agreement of which he had given me the text was the only answer which he proposed to return to the German note of 1907.⁽¹⁾ His language to the French Ambassador, who addressed a similar enquiry to him a day or two later, was still more explicit, as His Excellency then declared that no other document, secret or public, had either been prepared or was in course of preparation for communication to the German Government. Finally, on the 7th of this month Monsieur Sazonow informed a correspondent of the "Novoe Vremya" that, as regarded the Potsdam conversations, he could only repeat his former statement which had been published in the "Novoe Vremya" of the 9th November, and that any agreement which might be arrived at between the two Governments would be published "in extenso."

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

⁽³⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 578, No. 620, and *note* (5).]

⁽¹⁾ [*v. G.P.*, XXV (I), pp. 135-40.]

No. 648.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

1729/48/11/44.

(No. 12.) Secret.

Sir,

St. Petersburg, D. January 10, 1911.

R. January 16, 1911.

On my calling on the Minister for Foreign Affairs this afternoon His Excellency greeted me by saying that he was very much upset and that I could probably guess

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe. It was sent on January 20 to Paris; to Berlin; to Constantinople; to Tehran. Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations; to the Committee of Imperial Defence.]

the reason. On my replying in the affirmative, Monsieur Sazonow proceeded to say that he had a favour to ask of His Majesty's Government, namely that they would endeavour to discover the source from which the "Evening Times" had obtained a copy of the agreement which was being negotiated between him and the German Ambassador.⁽²⁾ In order to meet the wishes of the German Government he had altered the text of the fourth article of the original draft, and the version of it that had been published by the "Evening Times" was correct. According to its terms Germany was not to seek for concessions for railways, &c., in the Russian zone without first coming to an understanding with the Russian Government. This fact was known by no one outside the German and Russian Foreign Offices, not even by the Emperor of Russia himself, and he had therefore told Count Pourtalès, who had just been to see him, that, as this was the case the "Evening Times" could only have obtained its information at Berlin or St. Petersburg, and that it had certainly not done so at the latter capital. On my pointing out one or two discrepancies between the original draft and the published version, Monsieur Sazonow remarked that there were a few inaccuracies in some of the articles, but that taken as a whole the document published by the "Evening Times" was a literal translation of the original.

I said that I was sure that His Majesty's Government would be only too glad to render him every assistance in their power, but that I feared that they might have no means at their disposal for ascertaining the truth. It certainly seemed, after what he had told me, that somebody at the Berlin Foreign Office must have been guilty of a great indiscretion. The German Government did occasionally use the English press for the purpose of imparting to the world information which it wished to make public, whether that information were true or false. The report which had been communicated to His Excellency on his arrival at the Russian Embassy at Berlin, that His Majesty's Government were on the point of concluding an arrangement with the German Government on the subject of the Bagdad Railway, had originated in an article in the "Daily Chronicle," which had evidently been inspired in the Wilhelmstrasse. I should not, moreover, be surprised if the "Daily News" and the "Nation"⁽³⁾ had drawn their inspiration for their recent articles on the subject of the Triple Entente from the German Embassy in London. In any case I could give him the positive assurance that the articles in question in no way represented the views of His Majesty's Government, that the papers themselves did not enjoy the reputation which appears to be attributed to them abroad, and that the Russian Government need not entertain the slightest doubt as to the loyal and friendly sentiments of His Majesty's Government. Monsieur Sazonow replied that he never doubted this for a moment, and that until to-day, when the "Rech" had alluded to them, not a single Russian newspaper of importance had paid any attention to the articles in question.

On my asking later on in our conversation whether His Excellency could give me any further information with regard to the course of the negotiations with Count Pourtalès, Monsieur Sazonow replied that the German Government had, as he had anticipated, suggested several slight amendments in the text of the Draft Agreement. At first His Excellency did not seem inclined to inform me of their nature, but he subsequently told me that the German Government were anxious to alter the second article, so as to bind Russia to commence the construction of the North Persian Railway as soon as the Sadijeh-Khanikin line had been completed. His Excellency explained to me at some length that Count Pourtalès was insisting on obtaining such an assurance from Russia, in order to satisfy German public opinion that the Imperial Government was doing all it could to secure an access for German trade to Persia from the south, seeing that the northern route was closed to it by the transit dues in the Caucasus.

(2) [*v. supra*, pp. 601-3, No. 638.]

(3) [*v. supra*, p. 601, No. 637, note (s).]

I then enquired what truth there was in the reports which had appeared in the press, that the two Governments were about to engage not to enter into any fresh combinations respecting Asiatic affairs that could in any way be directed against the other. I reminded His Excellency of the explanations which he had given me as to the meaning of the German Chancellor's statement in the Reichstag with respect to the engagements taken at Potsdam, as regarded such combinations in general (see my immediately preceding despatch),⁽⁴⁾ and asked whether it was his intention to record these engagements in the Draft Agreement. Monsieur Sazonow replied by an emphatic negative, declaring that if the German Government proposed such a course to him, he would certainly not consent to it. He still held to the explanations which he had given me on the occasion of the Chancellor's speech.⁽⁵⁾ They represented what he held to be the true character of these engagements; but there were certain details connected with the Potsdam visit which he could not confide to me at present. He would, however, communicate them to His Majesty's Government when he went, as he hoped to be able to do later on, to London,⁽⁶⁾ and meanwhile he would ask me to reserve my report of what he had just told me for a despatch by Messenger, as he did not trust cypher telegrams. I did not like to press His Excellency further, and had therefore to be content with this somewhat enigmatic explanation.

On taking leave of Monsieur Sazonow I mentioned that I had to preside to-morrow at the annual dinner of the British community at St. Petersburg, and that, in view of all that had been said in the press of late with regard to the Triple Entente I proposed to say in the course of my speech that Anglo-Russian relations had never been more cordial than at the present moment; that the two nations were bound to each other by ties of sympathy and friendship, and that now we had got to know and understand each other, I was convinced that we should always remain the best of friends. Monsieur Sazonow replied that he entirely approved of my doing so, as he thought that such a statement might have a very good effect at the present moment. He would only ask me to add the word "interests" after "friendship and sympathy," as our common interests were the most important bond of union between us.

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

P.S. *January 12.*—I only noticed on looking at the map of Persia this afternoon that the line traced in the fourth article of the Draft Agreement, north of which the Germans are not to ask for concessions, runs for the last section considerably south of the Russian sphere of interest, and thus comprises a triangular block of the neutral zone. As Monsieur Sazonow had never called my attention to this fact I went to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and asked him to be good enough to explain the reason of including a reference to the neutral zone in the Draft Agreement. His Excellency replied that he had done so both in our interest and his own. The Russian Government were particularly anxious that the Germans should not obtain a concession in the portion of territory in question, and unless it was specifically mentioned in the Agreement, they would be free to do so as in any other portion of the neutral zone. He did not imagine that we should raise any objection to it. I said that, though we had understood that the neutral zone was not to be touched in the present negotiations, I did not personally see any objection, but that, as the matter stood at present, I should have preferred to have adhered to the original text of article 4 and not to have introduced the words "without coming previously to an understanding with the Russian Government." Monsieur Sazonow replied that he had himself introduced these words into the

⁽⁴⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

⁽⁵⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 578, No. 620, and note ⁽⁵⁾.]

⁽⁶⁾ [M. Sazonov's visit to England took place in September 1912, *cp. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (I), pp. 749-72, Chapter LXXVIII.]

article, and for the following reason. Count Pourtalès had objected to "concessions de caractère territorial" being added to Railways, &c., and, in order to overcome his opposition, he had put a full stop after the word "télégraphes" and begun a new sentence, in which the German Government declared that it would not seek for concessions of a territorial nature without the consent of the Russian Government. He rather doubted whether Count Pourtalès would accept even this text, and if he did not the sentence would stop at "télégraphes."

I then enquired whether he expected that the negotiations would continue for any length of time. His Excellency replied that he feared that they would, as in the first place the two Governments might wish to change the text completely so as to show that the "Evening Times" version was not the authentic one. I observed that, in that case, I trusted that His Excellency would be able to render the meaning of the first article clear by inserting the words "jusqu'à" before Bagdad. The Germans, Monsieur Sazonow said, would not be likely to accept this and though, on my remarking that if the text remained as it stood the whole German press would proclaim to the world that Russia had withdrawn her opposition to the whole Bagdad Railway scheme, His Excellency said he might try to do so, I do not think that there is the slightest chance of his making the attempt. He repeated to me once more his former arguments and his former assurances.

I further enquired what were the chief points that had still to be discussed. Monsieur Sazonow replied that article 2 would have to be reconsidered in order to fix the term in which the Teheran-Khanikin line should be commenced. He even gave me to understand that the Germans were asking to participate in its construction. It would, he remarked, be a very expensive line to build, and it was being built exclusively in the interests of Germany. As long as Russia retained the control, he thought that it would perhaps be more popular in this country were the Germans also to bear a share of its cost.

Monsieur Sazonow told me in the course of our conversation that the Turkish Ambassador in Berlin, on reading the "Evening Times" version of the Agreement had declared that its provisions with regard to the question of railways would be most prejudicial to Turkish interests and that, if they were persisted in Turkey would have to modify the terms of the Bagdad Railway concession.

G. W. B.

MINUTE.

Please see minutes on 1448,⁽⁷⁾ but there are some points mentioned in this despatch which are omitted from that telegram.

1. Details as to the alteration of art[icle] 4 as to which the account given in the text of the despatch differs slightly from that in the P.S.

2. The proposal to compensate Germany for commercial exclusion from the north of Persia by giving her facilities (at our expense) in the south.

3. There are to be further revelations about the Potsdam meeting when M. Sazonoff comes to London, by which time, it is to be feared it will be too late to take any steps to counteract anything objectionable that may have been done.

4. M. Sazonoff admits that the Tehran-Khanikin line will be built entirely in the interests of Germany. The Germans are asking that they may participate in its construction, a demand with which M. Sazonoff appears disposed to comply. This appears to stultify our note to the Persian Gov[ernment] of May 20th last⁽⁸⁾ about concessions.

H. N.

Jan[uary] 16, 1911.

E. A. C.

R. P. M.

A. N.

E. G.

⁽⁷⁾ [*v. infra*, p. 615, No. 646, mins.]

⁽⁸⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 553, No. 602, and note ⁽⁴⁾.]

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir A. Nicolson.⁽¹⁾

Private.⁽²⁾

My dear Nicolson.

St. Petersburg, January 12, 1911.

I am much obliged to you for your long and interesting letter by last bag.⁽³⁾

I am, on the whole, inclined to take a more favourable view of the situation than when I last wrote, and after what Sazonow told me in the conversation which I had with him on the 3rd instant I must modify what I wrote with regard to the dangers of an eventual Austro-Russian understanding. I had always imagined that he had inherited Iswolsky's hatred of Aehrenthal. Louis had told me that he had, on more than one occasion, expressed himself in terms of strong personal dislike and distrust of that statesman, and the Emperor's language at my Audience was still more emphatic. I was therefore somewhat surprised to find that Sazonow could speak of Aehrenthal's remaining in office with perfect equanimity, and that he could even admit that it might be to our interest that he should remain, for fear of his making way for a Minister who might prove more amenable to German influence. He admitted that public opinion in this country was so incensed against Austria that an understanding would be difficult at present, but he is evidently prepared to broach the subject at Vienna, should the situation in the Balkans become so acute as to render it advisable in the interests of peace. He would, however, limit it in such an event to some sort of "protocole de désintéressement" having for its object the maintenance of the "status quo," and he would be in favour of inviting the other Powers to associate themselves in any self-denying engagement which the two Governments might take.

I cannot help feeling that either Berchtold has brought with him some conciliatory messages from Vienna or that Aehrenthal has made some advances to Giers. It seems that Tschirschky rubbed the latter up the wrong way in proposing that they should work together to bring about Aehrenthal's fall, while Aehrenthal on the contrary appears to have made a good impression on him; but however this may be, it is satisfactory to know that Tschirschky's clumsy advances were a failure and that Russia seems now disposed to reconcile herself to Aehrenthal's continuance in office. It is also satisfactory to hear that Sazonow does not contemplate anything in the shape of a secret understanding with Austria and that he would prefer an arrangement to which all the other Powers could become parties.

Rumour has been very busy during the past fortnight with the question of the course that the Russo-German negotiations are taking. The climax has now been reached by the publication of the text of the Draft Agreement in the "Evening Times."⁽⁴⁾ Sazonow was very much upset by it and evidently suspects the German Foreign Office of having either through an indiscretion or intentionally let the cat out of the bag. The modifications which had been introduced into the fourth article were, he said, known to nobody outside the two Foreign Offices, and the "Evening Times" must therefore have derived their information either from the one or the other. The Emperor himself had not seen the amended text, and as he declares that the secret cannot have leaked out here, he naturally suspects Berlin. I am afraid that I was wicked enough to encourage him in the idea. I gave him your message about the "Daily News" articles;⁽⁵⁾ but it is a great pity that a leading Liberal paper should have written in such a strain, as one or two of

⁽¹⁾ [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe. The endorsement is initialled by Sir Edward Grey.]

⁽²⁾ [Carnock MSS., Vol. I of 1911.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 599-601, No. 637.]

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 601-3, No. 638.]

⁽⁵⁾ [The reference is to articles of December 29, 30 and 31, 1910, *cp. supra*, p. 601, No. 637, note ⁽⁸⁾.]

the minor organs of the Russian press have been remarking that nothing else could be expected from the "perfidious Albion," and the article has also been reproduced in the "Rossia."

I tried to get him to tell me what other amendments the German Government had proposed, but he was evidently so disconcerted by the publication of the Draft Agreement that he was not very communicative. He told me, however, under a promise that I would not report it by telegraph, that Germany was insisting on altering the text of the second article. As that article runs in the original draft,⁽⁶⁾ Russia is not bound to commence the construction of the line which is to link up the Sadijeh-Khanikin line and the Bagdad Railway with the North Persian Railway at any given time. Thus by deferring railway construction in north Persia, she could indefinitely postpone the realisation of Germany's wish to procure railway access for her trade to the Persian market. Pourtales had told him that since the transit dues in the Caucasus blocked the passage of German goods in the north, his Government must satisfy public opinion at home that they were doing their best to open Persia to German trade on the south. Sazonow will, I gathered, give way on this point and I do not quite see how he can avoid doing so, as otherwise the Germans would not agree not to seek for railway concessions in the Russian sphere without the consent of the Russian Government.

I further asked him whether there was any truth in the reports which had been current of late, that the two Governments were to engage not to enter into any new combination with regard to Asiatic affairs that could in any way be directed against the interests of the other, and I reminded him of the explanations which he had given me respecting the "portée" of the statement made by Bethmann-Hollweg in the Reichstag as regarded such combinations in general.⁽⁷⁾ He assured me positively that the Russian Government had no such intention; that he would not, if the German Government asked him to, include in any part of the Draft Agreement a clause recording the assurances exchanged at Potsdam on this subject; and that he adhered to the explanation which he had formerly given me respecting the Chancellor's statement, as it represented what he considers to be the true character and meaning of the engagements taken. You will remember that his view of the matter is that nothing has been said or done beyond affirming that, while neither Russia nor Germany wishes to detach the other from the group of Powers with which it is associated, neither the Triple Entente nor the Triple Alliance is directed in any hostile sense against the other. That this view is not held by the German Government is evident by what he said afterwards. There were, he told me, several details connected with the Potsdam conversations which he would like me to know, but he could not tell them now. He would, however, be more communicative when he went, as he hoped to do later on, to London. I did not like to press him further on the subject nor did I again allude to the vexed question of the first article. I fear that there is no chance of his being able to insert the words "jusqu'à" before Bagdad under present circumstances; but I think that it will be very satisfactory if he refuses to record in writing the engagement which he took verbally at Potsdam on the subject of "combinations." The weak point in his position is that Bethmann-Hollweg's statement in the Reichstag⁽⁷⁾ was submitted to him and approved by him before it was made. He now seems to realise that he accepted it in too great a hurry and without sufficiently reflecting on the very natural interpretation to which it lends itself. It would be an excellent thing if he really carries out his intention of visiting Paris and London, and I think that it might be well if Sir Edward would allow me to tell him how glad he would be to see him.

On taking leave of him yesterday I told him that I had to preside today at the annual dinner of the English colony and that, as I was expected to refer in

⁽⁶⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 574-5, No. 618, *encl.*]

⁽⁷⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 578, No. 620, and *note* (5).]

the course of my speech to the political situation, I proposed to say that Anglo-Russian relations had never been more cordial; that the two nations were bound to each other by common ties of friendship and sympathy, and that I was convinced that, now that we had got to know and understand each other, we would always remain the best of friends. He warmly approved my making such a statement, as he thought it would have a good effect at the present moment, and only begged that I would add the word "interests" after friendship and sympathy—as our common interests were our most important bond of union.

It is very curious that Sazonow should have made the mistake he did in telling me that the Indian Government had expressed its approval of the trans-Persian railway scheme. He actually twice repeated to me the words: "the military authorities will not oppose the project."

If Sazonow keeps his word and does not give a written engagement not to enter into combinations which might be directed against Germany, I cannot help hoping that we will also refrain from contracting any engagement of a like character with that Empire. It would, of course, be a different thing if Sir Edward is able to carry out the idea, which he mentioned to me in London, of letting Germany bring her two Allies, while we brought our two friends, into some sort of general understanding. But an Anglo-German Agreement, unless arrived at in concert with Russia, however it may be worded, would be sure to be misrepresented here and would I fear, seriously shake our good understanding with Russia. Sazonow, I fully admit, has committed some grievous mistakes; but he is, I think, being gradually disillusioned and, though the Germans may get the better of him this time, he will not be so easily taken in again. He gave me the impression yesterday of being anything but pleased with them and of wishing more than ever to keep close friends with us. I think, therefore, that, with care and patience, we may still hold our own against Germany and end by keeping Russia on our side.

Ever yours,

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

P.S. Sazonow told O'Beirne last night that the text of the Draft Agreement, such as it had been published in the press, did not exist in St. Petersburg, but only in Berlin. The only text in the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs was the original Russian draft, and the proposed emendations were written by Sazonow on separate slips of paper.

G. W. B.

7 P.M. Having barely time to catch the Messenger, I cannot write further to you in this letter, but here is a copy of the post[s]cript which I have added to my despatch No. 12.⁽⁸⁾

G. W. B.

MINUTE.

Certainly I should be glad to see M. Sazonow if he wishes to come⁽⁹⁾ and Sir G. Buchanan may say so.

E. G.

⁽⁸⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

⁽⁹⁾ [For M. Sazonov's visit in September 1912, v. *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (I), pp. 749-72, Chapter LXXVIII.]

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

St. Petersburg, January 13, 1911.

1435/48/11/44.

D. 12.55 A.M.

Tel. (No. 13.)

R. 8.30 A.M.

I only noticed this afternoon on looking at the map of Persia that the line traced in the 4th article of the draft agreement,⁽²⁾ cuts off a triangular block of neutral zone near the Afghan frontier.

On my asking the Minister for Foreign Affairs the reason for his including a reference to the neutral zone in the agreement his Excellency explained that he had done so in our interest as well as in his own, as he thought it most important that Germany should be barred from seeking railway concessions in that region. He gave me to understand that he had inserted the words "latitude of Ghazik" without previous discussion with the German Government, who he feared might still raise objections.

MINUTES.

It seems to me important that Germany should get concessions for railways nowhere in Persia. The point raised in article 4 may be of importance, tho[ugh] it seems strange to have to deal with possibilities of a German danger on the Afghan frontier.

A. P.

Jan[uary] 13, 1911.

R. P. M.

Unless this was an afterthought, M. Sazonow's statement to Sir G. Buchanan that the neutral zone had not been mentioned at Potsdam was incorrect.

It would be interesting to know more on this point.

It is not improbable that the German G[overnmen]t will shortly make proposals about the Bagdad Railway and about Persia.

Perhaps it would be well to consider these questions especially the latter at once in comm[unica]t[i]o[n] with the India Office and B[oard] of Trade, possibly by a little Committee. We have all the facts but there are new factors to consider—e.g., the effect of the Russo-German understanding on the joint warning to Persia.

L. M.

M. Sazonoff distinctly said before the Potsdam meeting that he would not *discuss* the neutral zone.⁽³⁾ Perhaps he would reply that he has not discussed it—but he has evidently dealt with it. The suggestion of Mr. Mallet for a small Committee merits consideration.

Proceed with Mr. Mallet's suggestion.

A. N.

E. G.

⁽¹⁾ [A copy of this telegram was sent to the India Office (Secret).]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 574-5, No. 618, *encl.*]

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 550, No. 599, and *note* (3).]

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 371/1237.

St. Petersburg, January 13, 1911.

1448/48/11/44.

Tel. (No. 14.)

D. 3.7 P.M.

R. 4 P.M.

Secret. My immediately preceding tel[egram].⁽¹⁾

I had no time to telegraph more fully yesterday report of my hurried conversation with M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs]. I told him, while I personally saw

⁽¹⁾ [*v. immediately preceding document*]

no objection to his binding Germans not to seek concessions in a strip of territory near Afghan frontier, we had always understood question of neutral zone was not to be touched in pending negotiations.

Chief criticism that I have to make on the proposed change is that the restriction of German rights in this portion of neutral zone may be regarded as an admission by Russia of Germany's right to seek for them in the rest of that zone. I do not know how far this right can be disputed. On my enquiring whether Germany was asking him to recognise her full liberty of action with regard to British and neutral zones His Excellency replied in the negative.

M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] told me that negotiations would probably last some time as the whole text might have to be redrafted so as to show that published version was not authentic.⁽²⁾ I observed that in that case it would be easy for him to make the meaning of first Article clear but he said that Germany would not now consent to such an alteration as I had proposed. I spoke to him rather strongly on the subject as I think it is necessary to show him that he must have some regard for our interests, but he only repeated his old arguments and assurances. He also informed me that Article II would need revision and I gather he contemplates allowing Germany to participate in Khanikin-Tehran line.

H[is] E[xcellency] gave me the impression of being very depressed as if he were vainly struggling to escape from net in which he has got entangled.

MINUTES.⁽³⁾

I must confess that I feel rather nervous lest M. Sasonow may have given Germany a certain liberty of action with regard to the neutral and British zones, though we must accept his statement that he has not given her *full* liberty of action.

Shortly before the Potsdam interview I ventured to recall in a minute⁽³⁾ that H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] had specified, in a memorandum communicated to M. Isvolsky in October 1908,⁽⁴⁾ the concessions in Persia, as regards railways and ports, which they desired to earmark; and I suggested that it might be well to inform the Russian Gov[ernment] that we proposed to intimate those specific concessions to the Persian Gov[ernment]. This proposal was not approved, because a) it might cause a flutter in Europe, and b) we had already emphasised to the Russian Gov[ernment] the importance we attached to nothing being conceded to Germany in the neutral zone without previous consultation with us.

Perhaps we might now consider the proposal again: it will be much easier to resist German demands for concessions in Persia if we have put in a prior claim, based as it would be on past promises of the Persian Gov[ernment] (Shah) in regard to railway concessions.

Perhaps M. Sasonow's depression is due to the Emperor having become aware of the text of the draft agreement, as H[is] M[ajesty] is reported not to have known it before it was published in the papers.

I am afraid there will be a great many questions about the draft agreement when Parliament meets.

Query:—Should The King have a copy of this telegram.

Copy I[ndia] O[ffice].

A. P.

January 13th, 1911.

R. P. M.

This tel[egram] requires very careful consideration—and I should like to speak on it with the Sec[retary] of State.

A. N.

I shall be back on Monday morning.

E. G.

14.1.11.

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 574–5, No. 618, *encl.* The extract from the *Evening Times* is given *supra*, pp. 601–3, No. 638.]

⁽³⁾ [A minute by Mr. Mallet written in connection with this telegram is printed *infra*, p. 623, *Ed. note.*]

⁽⁴⁾ [Mr. Parker's minute on this question is printed in *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. VI, pp. 451–2, No. 343. Reference to the memorandum of October 14, 1908, is given *ibid.*, p. 402, No. 300, and *note* ⁽¹⁾; p. 452, No. 343, *note* ⁽³⁾.]

No. 647.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

1628/48/11/44.

Tel. (No. 15.) Secret.

St. Petersburg, D. January 14, 1911.

R. January 15, 1911, 10.30 A.M.

At the new year's reception this morning I told the Emperor how greatly pleased the King had been with the gracious reception His Majesty had accorded me and with the very friendly assurances he had given. His Majesty replied that this was but natural, as we could always count upon friendliness of his sentiments. On my referring to polemical discussions carried on in the press respecting the Russo-German negotiations, His Majesty said that revelations of the "Evening Times,"⁽²⁾ had come as a bomb-shell, and that, after the thorough manner in which matter had been investigated at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs here, it was clearly established that the information could not have been obtained at St. Petersburg.

I said that secret had certainly not leaked out in London, as we were not acquainted with the revised text of the fourth article, and it therefore looked as if an indiscretion had been committed at Berlin. His Majesty silently acquiesced, and was then pleased to say that he had seen a report of my speech at the English Club, and was very glad that I had spoken as I did. I then ventured to speak in much the same sense as I had done at my audience. His Majesty's Government, I said, were only too glad that Russo-German relations should be placed on a more friendly footing, but we trusted that no engagement might be contracted which would fetter Russia's liberty of co-operating with us as freely as in the past, and that her promise not to oppose Bagdad Railway would not prevent her working together with us with regard to railway between Bagdad and the Gulf. The Emperor said that it would make no difference whatever, and that engagement to which I had referred had only reference to railway as far as Bagdad.

From the frank and cordial manner in which the Emperor spoke to me I think that there can be no doubt that, in spite of the unfortunate assurances which Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs has given so light-heartedly, His Majesty has no intention at present of giving a new direction to his foreign policy.

The Emperor told the French Ambassador that he had read the French Minister for Foreign Affairs' speech with great satisfaction; that it gave a clear and accurate *exposé* of the political situation; and that he concurred in all that His Excellency had said.

MINUTES.

But unfortunately the German Gov[ernmen]t will never admit this (see Sir G. Buchanan's No. 12).⁽³⁾

Approve Sir G. Buchanan's language.⁽⁴⁾

L. M.

A. N.

Sir George Buchanan has spoken very frankly and well throughout.

E. G.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram is endorsed as having been sent to the King.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 601-3, No. 638.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 607-10, No. 643.]

⁽⁴⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's despatch (No 17) of January 18, 1911, approved Sir G. Buchanan's language. (F.O. 371/1237. 1628/48/11/44.)]

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.

Private.⁽¹⁾

My dear Buchanan,

Foreign Office, January 14, 1911.

I certainly did raise the point as to whether, if the trans-Persian line was connected with the Bagdad Railway, it might not some day prove a means by which a hostile Mussulman force could be directed against India. I did not suggest that the trans-Persian line could avoid Tehran; but I need not say more on this point now, except that I am glad that M. Sazonow will for the present leave the question of connection between the two lines open.

I should not object to giving the proposed railway an international character. But one of the main objects of our understanding with Russia was that railways should not be pushed further towards India than the western frontier of our sphere of interest in Persia, under conditions which would make it possible for them to be used against us. I do not well see how we can be secured against this contingency, unless the part of the railway from the western frontier of our sphere of interest in Persia onwards to India is to be controlled by us. Our sphere in Persia is so much less than that of Russia, that I should think this might be arranged, even if the general character of the line is international. I did not mean to stipulate that the whole railway should be a simply Anglo-Russian concern.

I am still waiting for the views of the Government of India and the India Office. When I get them, I intend to suggest to the Cabinet that the question should be considered by the Committee of Imperial Defence. This must take a little time, but it would be impossible for me to get the consent of the Cabinet, or for the Cabinet to get the consent of Parliament, until the strategical considerations have been thoroughly discussed by the competent authorities.

Meanwhile, I personally am favourable to the scheme and hope the objections to it will not be insuperable.⁽²⁾

Yours sincerely,

E. GREY.

⁽¹⁾ [Grey MSS., Vol. 35.]

⁽²⁾ [Sir G. Buchanan reported in a private telegram of January 22, that he had spoken to M. Sazonov on the 21st in the terms of Sir Edward Grey's letter. He said that he had been again assured that, although it was very important for Russia to establish friendly relations with Germany, the present negotiations would not in the slightest degree affect the attitude of Russia to Great Britain. Grey MSS., Vol. 35.]

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

Pera, January 15, 1911.

1648/48/11/44.

D. 1 P.M.

Tel. (No. 10.)

R. 5.15 P.M.

My telegram No. 8.⁽²⁾

According to an inspired communiqué in the "Tanin" this morning German Ambassador yesterday informed Minister for Foreign Affairs that nothing had yet been concluded as result of Potsdam interview; that negotiations now proceeding had reference solely to construction and junction of railways on Persian soil, and at the same time denying categorically truth of report that Germany was negotiating

⁽¹⁾ [A copy of this telegram was sent to the India Office.]

⁽²⁾ [Mr. Marling's telegram (No. 8) of January 13, 1911, D. 1 P.M., R. 3.15 P.M., stated that the Young Turk party was dissatisfied with the terms of the Russo-German Agreement published in Constantinople. (F.O. 371/1237. 1442/48/11/44.)]

about the terminal point of Bagdad Railway, (?) stating that no negotiations concerning Mesopotamia, which was a part of Ottoman soil, would take place without previously consulting and obtaining consent of Ottoman Government.

According to "Tanin" these assurances were given verbally and in writing.⁽³⁾

"Tanin" adds that, according to its information contemplated Russo-German agreement henceforth implies confirmation by Germany of the position in North Persia accorded to Russia in virtue of Anglo-Russian convention of 1907.⁽⁴⁾ and that it has obtained from an authorised source, categorical denial of rumour that Germany had undertaken to disinterest herself in any railway between Khanikin and Caucasus.

These communiqués are obviously intended to allay anti-German irritation here.

MINUTES.

Compare the 'categorical denial' referred to in the penultimate paragraph with Art[icle] 3 of the Evening news version.⁽⁵⁾ The Germans are evidently insisting on participation in the Khanikin-Tehran lines.

A. N.

I do not see what bearing this denial has upon the Khanikin-Tehran line which is in Persian Territory.

Article 3 seems intended to refer to Turkish territory; this is why it has annoyed the Turks and why it has been denied.

E. G.

⁽³⁾ [*cp. infra*, pp. 619-20, No. 651.]

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IV, pp. 618-20, App. I.]

⁽⁵⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 601-3, No. 638.]

No. 650.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir R. Rodd.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 871/1119.

2068/792/11/18.

(No. 5.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 16, 1911.

The Italian Ambassador asked me to-day about the Russo-German negotiations at Potsdam.

I said that we heard from St. Petersburg that these negotiations had made no change in the orientation of Russian policy, and I considered that nothing had happened that implied a re-grouping of the European Powers, or that would impair our cordial relations with Russia.

The Ambassador enquired whether I was quite satisfied with regard to the Bagdad Railway.

I replied that the Bagdad Railway was only one thing, and it must not be regarded as deciding our foreign policy as a whole. What had passed at Potsdam with regard to the Bagdad Railway was, I hoped, the first step towards a general solution of the problem; and a solution was much to be desired.

The Ambassador then told me that he had sent to his Government a report on an article which had appeared in the "Daily News"⁽²⁾ recently on the subject of Ententes with Russia and France, and which had excited much comment.

I said that the article had been brought to my notice. It did not seem to me to be very fortunately worded. It was certainly not inspired, nor did it represent the foreign policy of the Government. As a matter of fact, the "Daily News"

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the Prime Minister and to Lord Crewe.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 601, No. 637, note (8).]

and some other newspapers on the Liberal side were constantly attacking the foreign policy of the Government. It was quite true that our understandings with France and Russia had no aggressive point against Germany; but the "Daily News" article might have given the impression that we were prepared to sacrifice some of our friendship with Russia or France in order to improve our relations with Germany. That we would never do.

The Ambassador said that, if Germany approached us on minor points of difficulty, he supposed there would be no lack of disposition here to meet her.

I replied that we certainly wished to be on the best of terms with Germany ourselves, and rejoiced to see France and Germany and Germany and Russia on good terms. If Germany acted in good faith, she could have the best relations with every Power in Europe. Difficulty had been caused in the past by what I called the "dregs" of the Bismarckian policy: the making of mischief between other Powers, and the poisoning of the mind of one against another. But I did not say that this existed now.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

No. 651.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

2489/48/11/44.

(No. 49.) Confidential.

Sir,

Constantinople, D. January 17, 1911.

R. January 23, 1911.

I have the honour to report that the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs informed me yesterday that the communiqué published in the "Tanin" of the 15th instant—an almost textual translation of which I reported in my telegram No. 10 of the same date⁽²⁾—gave a substantially accurate version of the assurances given by the German Ambassador as to the scope of the negotiations in progress between Germany and Russia as a result of the meeting of the Kaiser and Tzar at Potsdam. His Excellency said that the Turkish Government had been very much disturbed by the revelations of the "Evening Times"⁽³⁾ but that the explanations received from Baron von Marschall had quite relieved them of their first suspicions that Germany had been carrying on independent negotiations with a third Power on matters of vital concern to Turkey, and had acted in a manner derogatory to her dignity as an independent State. I observed that one of the points in the agreement as reported by the "Evening Times" was to the effect that Germany undertook not to construct any railways in Asia Minor in the vicinity of the Persian Frontier to the north of Khanikin; might I take it from His Excellency that Baron von Marschall's statement included a denial of this? Rifaat Pasha replied that I might certainly do so, for as a matter of fact the Ambassador's explanations amount to a declaration that the discussion between the two Powers had been limited to two points, viz: the recognition by Russia of the policy of the open door in Persia, and an undertaking by her for the eventual linking up of the Persian railway system with the Bagdad Railway.

I am not, of course, aware what were the exact words used by the German Ambassador to convey this impression to the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs, but he has certainly shown remarkable skill in wording it, even if, when taken strictly "au pied de la lettre," it contained nothing in flagrant contradiction with

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe. Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations; to the Committee of Imperial Defence.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 617-8, No. 649.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 601-3, No. 638.]

the actual facts as communicated to His Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg by M. Sazonow. If, however, Baron von Marschall had to make out the best case he could without sacrificing too much to mere veracity, Rifaat Pasha on his side was equally, if not perhaps more, interested in appearing to accept his explanation. Otherwise he would not have blinked the obvious criticism of the German explanations, viz: that apparently Russia was to get no quid pro quo for the concessions, which, according to Baron von Marschall's statements, she was making to Germany. But the truth is that the present Cabinet has so far committed itself, under the pressure of the Salonica Committee influences, to a policy of rapprochement with Germany, that for it now to cavil at or show mistrust of the lame and tardy explanations which the revelations of the "Evening Times" have forced the German Government to concoct, would be a confession of error of which the Opposition would make considerable capital. The German Ambassador must feel that he is walking on very thin ice, and it will be interesting to note how he will extricate his Government from the much more embarrassing situation which would result if an authoritative statement of the real facts, which M. Sazonow is stated to have promised, is given to the public. Meantime, the Turkish Foreign Office has to profess itself to be entirely satisfied, and the Committee Press labours hard to blind the Turkish public to the real facts. . . . (1)

I have, &c.

CHARLES M. MARLING.

MINUTES.

Baron Marschall's denial of the existence of Art[icle] 3 of the draft agreement is startling and was, so far as we know, uttered without previous consultation with the Russian Gov[ernmen]t

We see from Sir G. Buchanan's tel[egram] No. 18⁽⁵⁾ received this morning that the German Gov[ernmen]t are now occupied in persuading the Russian Gov[ernmen]t to make the facts square with Baron Marschall's statements by weakening or eliminating the incriminating article. Sir G. Buchanan fears that they will succeed so that Russia will lose the sole advantage remaining from what she was supposed to be going to gain from the negotiations.

H. N.

Jan[uary] 23, 1911.

One of the objects of Art[icle] 3 was to prevent German railways from being built to the Persian frontier. M. Sazonow forgot this when he "laughed" at our apprehension of Turkish invasion of Persia.⁽⁵⁾

L. M.

A. N.

This is a very good point of Mr. Mallet's which may be useful later on unless Russia ends by dropping Article 3.

E. G.

(4) [The omitted paragraphs of this despatch refer chiefly to the attitude of the Turkish Press to the Bagdad Railway negotiations.]

(5) [*v. infra*, p. 627, No. 657. This telegram was received in London late on January 22.]

No. 652.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1282.

2490/21/11/44.

(No. 50.) Secret.

Sir,

Constantinople, D. January 17, 1911.

R. January 28, 1911.

In my despatches Nos. 14 and 15 of January 4th⁽²⁾ I had the honour to submit some remarks on Young Turkey's views as to the policy to be pursued

(1) [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe. Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations; to the Committee of Imperial Defence.]

(2) [Mr. Marling's despatch (No. 14), D. January 4, R. January 9, 1911, will be published in *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. X (II). His despatch (No. 15) forwarded a copy of an article in the *Tanin* of December 28, 1910. (F.O. 371/1236. 849/29/11/44.)]

in Southern Mesopotamia, and on the connexion in the Turkish mind between the settlement of the Koweit question and the arrangements for completing the terminal section of the Bagdad Railway.

I notice by the Government of India's telegram of December 1st enclosed in the India Office's letter of December 9th, 1910,⁽³⁾ that the resident at Bushire advocates the necessity "from the local standpoint" of publishing our agreement with Koweit and intimating to the Turkish Government our intention of making it effective, while also eliminating the anomaly of the Turkish flag there, inducing the Turks to confine themselves to Katif and Ojair, and bringing about their withdrawal from El Bida'a, Jinnah, Umkasr, and Babujan.

I would venture to submit that, for the reasons in part set forth in my despatch No. 14 of the 4th January, the time has not yet come for such a drastic treatment of our outstanding difficulties with the Turks at the head of the Persian Gulf. As pointed out in Sir Gerard Lowther's No. 608 of the 22nd August, 1910,⁽⁴⁾ and in my No. 14 of the 4th instant, the Turks expect that in return for their making the arrangements we desire concerning the Bagdad-Persian Gulf section of the railway, we shall restore them to complete sovereignty over Koweit. They attach immense importance to the latter point and, should it ever be deemed expedient to accede to the Turkish desire in the matter, such a solution might be made dependent on their resigning all claims to Bahrein, El Katr, and everything South-East of Ojair. The other assets we possess for bargaining are the "Comet" and the Sepoy guard at the Bagdad Consulate-General. But as long as Turkish Constitutionalism is a mere travesty of popular institutions and is associated mainly with the state of siege and secret court-martials any settlement on the above lines, implying as it would the delivery of Koweit to the tender mercies of the Committee Régime would seem to be excluded.

Should the Committee eventually prove unable to establish an orderly government and the Empire be brought to a state of anarchy, as in Persia, it might become necessary to consider the expediency of openly proclaiming a protectorate over Koweit and its dependencies, but, in the meantime, any whisper of our intention to adopt such a course would raise a fierce storm both here and in Central Europe. The recent report in the "Daily Telegraph" which reached here through the "Neue Freie Presse" to the effect that England was about to conclude an arrangement with Germany that the Bagdad Railway should terminate at an "English port" in the Gulf i.e., Koweit called forth very angry remarks in the "Tanin." The writer concludes his comments by stating that it is imperative to warn those who are working to establish foreign influence in Mesopotamia, "the oldest and most attached province of the Empire" that their schemes are vain and that "the mention of an English port in the Persian Gulf, to be established to the detriment of Ottoman interests and territorial integrity is the height of indelicacy."

I have, &c.

CHARLES M. MARLING.

(3) [This document is not reproduced as it cannot be identified.]

(4) [This document will be published in *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. X (II).]

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.
2081/48/11/44.
(No. 19.) Secret.

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 17, 1911.

I gave Count Benckendorff to-day⁽²⁾ a short summary of the history of the Bagdad Railway question.

For some time, M. Iswolsky had been reluctant even to admit the principle of agreeing to the Bagdad Railway. In those days, I had urged that, as the Railway was sure to be made sooner or later, it was waste of time to discuss whether it should be agreed to in principle, and the important thing was to decide on what terms it should be agreed to.

On the occasion of the German Emperor's visit to Windsor a few years ago,⁽³⁾ the Germans had expressed themselves willing to discuss with us the question of the railway. I had told Herr von Schoen that the discussion must be "à quatre." Neither he nor the Emperor raised objections to that at the time, but subsequently the Germans had refused to have a discussion "à quatre."

All this, together with the Russian reluctance to accept the principle of the Railway, had for some time suspended negotiations.

Latterly, the position had been that each of us might negotiate separately with the German Government, but that we should make no arrangement definite until a settlement was come to with all of us. I showed Count Benckendorff the conclusion of my letter of 31 May 1910⁽⁴⁾ to Sir Henry Babington-Smith, who was then negotiating with Herr Gwinner on behalf of Sir Ernest Cassel. The last sentence was as follows: ". . . It would be well for you to make sure that any proposals put forward by Herr Gwinner have the approval of the German Government, and you must clearly understand that we can approve no agreement definitely without consulting the French and Russian Governments."

It appeared now that, at Potsdam, M. Sazonow had agreed definitely to give Germany what she desired, namely: a junction at Khanikin. This was really all that Germany did wish to get from Russia; and the fact that Germany had obtained this from Russia definitely must to some extent weaken our position in dealing with Germany with regard to the Bagdad Railway.

Count Benckendorff observed that this arrangement concerned only a branch of the Bagdad Railway, and did not really settle the question of the Railway. Indeed, it might be said to be not the Bagdad Railway at all. More would be required from Russia before the Railway was concluded; for instance, her agreement to the 4% increase of the Turkish Customs Dues. In regard to this M. Sazonow was still quite unpledged. Further, though M. Sazonow had agreed to a connection at Khanikin, he had not undertaken to make the Persian branch in any definite time.

With regard to this last point, I observed that the negotiations between Russia and Germany were not yet concluded, and I doubted whether it was certain that the time for making the branch in Persia would remain indefinite, as Count Benckendorff said it was now.

There was another point on which I wished to comment. I gathered, from what M. Sazonow had said to you, that Germany might press for participation in the Tehran-Khanikin branch. It would be a very serious matter if Germany obtained

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. Siebert*, pp. 536-9.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. VI, pp. 78-107, Chapter XLII, section II.]

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. VI, pp. 491-2, No. 376.]

any control of this branch. For, in times of Pan-Islamic excitement, it might be used to mobilise German-trained Mussulman forces. Germany, who had no Mussulman subjects, was not embarrassed by Pan-Islamism; but it might be very serious to Russia and England. It was therefore most important that Russia should retain absolute control.

Further, I observed that, though M. Sazonow had stated originally that he would not discuss the neutral zone in Persia without first consulting us, he had brought part of it into his negotiations with Germany. I made no complaint as to what was done with regard to this part taken by itself; but the Germans might now contend that, as part of the neutral zone had been dealt with in the agreement, this implied that Russia would not raise any question about the rest of the neutral zone; and this might be an embarrassment to Russia if we asked for her co-operation in matters concerning the neutral zone generally.

I then said to Count Benckendorff that, though I made these criticisms on the negotiations at Potsdam, I wished it to be clearly understood that I did not regard them as affecting the general relations between Russia and England: which would remain as far as I was concerned as cordial and intimate as ever. Nor did I wish Russia to back out of the arrangement which she had made: that would make her relations with Germany worse than before, and it would suit neither Russia nor us that she should be on bad terms with Germany. What I did wish was that Russia should be on her guard respecting the points to which I had called attention.

I also told Count Benckendorff that we must now, as opportunity occurred, make the best terms we could with Germany or Turkey as to the section of the Railway from Bagdad to the Gulf. It was most important that M. Sazonow should keep in reserve the question of the 4% increase of Turkish Customs Dues, so that we might both co-operate on this point. I was very glad to hear what Count Benckendorff had said on this point, and to learn from him how clear M. Sazonow's view with regard to it was.

[I am, &c.]
E. G[REY].

[*ED. NOTE.*—The following minute by Mr. Mallet commenting upon Sir G. Buchanan's telegram (No. 14) of January 13 (*v. supra*, pp. 614–5, No. 646) is attached to Sir Edward Grey's draft of the immediately preceding document:—

Sir Edward Grey.

Sir G. Buchanan's Tel[egram] No. 14 Secret.

Sir G. Buchanan gathers that M. Sazonow contemplated allowing Germany participation in the Tehran-Khanikin Line. M. Sazonow, in reply to your remarks on the possibility of a Mussulman invasion of Persia, said that the Railway would be a *Russian* line which would make invasion from Turkey impossible.

If the line is partly German, I consider that this danger is a serious one.

The Turkish army, in a few years, will be most formidable and we know what Turkish views are with regard to Persia and Pan-Islamism.

I don't think that the Gov[ernment] of India will like this development at all and it may influence the decision of H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] as to the Trans-Persian Line.

I should be in favour of explaining this at once to Count Benckendorff or direct to M. Sazonow, without delay. I think that we ought also to have a frank discussion with the French Gov[ernment] on the present situation, in order to make up our minds how far we propose to maintain the understanding at present in force—that neither Power will come to an agreement with Germany about the Bagdad Railway without consulting the other.

To my mind and especially in the light of the Russo-German negotiations, it is more important than ever to maintain this understanding. It is perfectly clear that M. Sazonow has been out-manœuvred at every point and it will be necessary for us to proceed most cautiously, otherwise we run the risk of making our relations with Germany far worse than they are now.

L. M.
16 Jan[uary].

Seen by Sir E[dward] Grey.]

[*ED. NOTE*—Sir Edward Grey's despatch (No. 28) to Sir F. Bertie (re immediately succeeding document) was drafted and sent to Sir F. Bertie on January 18, 1911 (*cp. infra*, pp. 632-3, No. 660). After it had been sent, questions were raised which led to the insertion of amendments which are shewn below in footnotes. The amended despatch was sent to Sir F. Bertie, but the date cannot be ascertained. The following minutes indicate the origin of the changes:—

MINUTES.

Mr. Mallet.

In accordance with your request I have examined the recent papers about Koweit. I entirely agree with Mr. Hirtzel—and in view of the importance of the subject in relation to the status of Koweit and the Bagdad R[ai]l[wa]y I hope an amended draft to Paris may be sent. Perhaps to avoid all misunderstanding, it could be read to M. Cambon.

I think we went as far as we prudently can about Koweit in our letter of Jan[uary] 20 to the India Office.⁽¹⁾ See especially the last sentence of paragraph 4 of that letter.

I have made some suggestions on the draft to Paris.

A. P.

Feb[ruary] 11, 1911.

I think that the use of the word sovereignty may have been unintentional or that Sir Edward really said suzerainty but the point can be referred to him next week.

L. M.

Feb[ruary] 11.

Shown to Sir E. Grey and desp[atch] to Paris amended. Mr. Hirtzel should be informed.]

⁽¹⁾ [This letter, dated January 21, 1911, stated that the Koweit question must be included in the Bagdad Railway negotiations.

The last sentence of paragraph four was as follows:—

“A settlement of the question under discussion would probably only be satisfactory if it involved the control of the port [of Koweit] by His Majesty's Government and the sheikh, thus excluding Turkish or German interference at Koweit in internal matters.” (F.O. 371/1232. 848/21/11/44.)

No. 654.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

2081/48/11/44.

(No. 28.) Secret.

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 18, 1911.

I gave M. Cambon to-day, verbally, the substance of my conversation with Count Benckendorff yesterday,⁽²⁾ omitting any reference to the details of German participation in the Tehran-Khanikin branch railway and to the neutral zone in Persia.

M. Cambon took the same view as I did as to what M. Sazonow had done at St. Petersburg with regard to the Bagdad Railway, and said that it was more than ever necessary that France and we should keep in close touch and act in accord.

I concurred in this.

M. Cambon said that M. Sazonow had informed the French Ambassador in St. Petersburg that, owing to the publication of the draft agreement,⁽³⁾ the draft would have to be set aside, and some time would be required to arrange matters. M. Cambon understood that M. Sazonow had said to Sir George Buchanan not only that time would be required, but that in the course of further discussion the arrangement with Germany might have to be extended, so as to embrace more than was comprised in the negotiations at Potsdam.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe. Copies were sent to the Director of Military Operations; to the Committee of Imperial Defence.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp. 622-3, No. 653.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 601-3, No. 638.]

I said that M. Sazonow had stated that only what related to the Bagdad Railway would be put in writing, and that whatever else there might be would not be in writing.

I then told M. Cambon that, if we received a proposal as to the Bagdad Railway from either Germany or Turkey, we should try to get the best possible terms in connection with the section from Bagdad to the Gulf. But we should not make a definitive arrangement without consulting the French Government, and keeping in touch with them.

M. Cambon asked me what arrangement would be possible, for he understood that we had told Djavid Bey that we could not agree to the conversion of the Bagdad-Gulf Section into a Turkish railway.

I replied that, on the contrary, we had told Djavid Bey that, if the Gulf Section was to be a Turkish railway, and the Turks would employ British engineers, materials, etc., an arrangement might be possible. As to Koweit, if the Turks would guarantee the "status quo" of the Sheik's position, we would recognise Turkish sovereignty definitely over the whole district⁽⁴⁾; and it should then not be impossible for the Turks to lease a harbour to us.

The information that we should recognize Turkish sovereignty⁽⁵⁾ over Koweit seemed to be new to M. Cambon. He said that on these terms a Turkish railway made by British engineers and British materials, with a British Director, and a harbour constructed and managed by us seemed to offer a possible solution.

I asked him what France would require.

He answered that the Bagdad-Homs line would be of no use until Mesopotamia was made profitable by irrigation. France would, however, ask for the preference in making this line if Turkey ever decided to have it built. This he regarded as a rather remote contingency. France would also ask for the junction of the Aleppo line with the Bagdad Railway; for the Samsun-Sivas line; and perhaps also some small railway in the north. After all that had passed, Russia ought to agree to this.

I said that, in any case, we must keep in touch, and we must both see that M. Sazonow held to his position with regard to the 4% increase of the Turkish Customs Dues. I impressed upon M. Cambon that I did not wish to try to upset the arrangement which Russia had made with Germany. I wished M. Sazonow to make the best of it. If it were upset, there would be a great deal of friction, and no one could say how far the consequences might extend.

M. Cambon said that we must look upon what had been done at Potsdam as a loss to be written off.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

⁽⁴⁾ [The amended draft was as follows: "we would recognise Turkish suzerainty over the whole district." The final clause of this paragraph was deleted as the result of a note by Mr. Parker: "(The Sheikh has already leased us ground for such a harbour. A. P.)."]

⁽⁵⁾ [The amended draft was as follows: "The information that we were prepared to recognise Turkish suzerainty."]

No. 655.

Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1218.

2243/2243/11/38.

(No. 34.) Confidential.

Sir,

Paris, D. January 19, 1911.

R. January 20, 1911.

At an interview which I had with M. Pichon yesterday I congratulated His Excellency on his speech in the debate in the Chamber of Deputies on the Foreign

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe. Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

Office Estimates. He said that it was necessary to gloss over the proceedings of M. Sazonow at Berlin. In his anxiety to obtain some advantage for Russia, the latter had neglected to communicate, as he ought to have done, with the French and British Governments in regard to the Bagdad Railway question, and he had tied his hands in that question.

I referred to the dissatisfaction which had been shewn by the Turkish Press at the Agreement between Russia and Germany, and M. Pichon said that he was not entirely unconnected with that dissatisfaction for, when Naoum Pasha, the Turkish Ambassador at Paris, had enquired what he knew concerning the Potsdam interviews, he had replied that all he could tell him was that they had dealt with Persia and that it was not to be supposed that M. Sazonow had acceded to German desires in regard to Persia without some compensatory advantages which perhaps might not be consistent with the interests of other Powers. It would be for the Porte to consider what they might be.

M. Pichon further told me that, having heard that there might be modifications in the Russo-German Agreement he had plainly told the Russian Ambassador that in such event and in any future cases in which French interests are involved, the French Government expects to be consulted and kept informed by the Russian Government.

I have, &c.

FRANCIS BERTIE.

No. 656.

Sir F. Cartwright to Sir A. Nicolson.⁽¹⁾

Private.⁽²⁾

My dear Nicolson,

Vienna, January 19, 1911.

Many thanks for your letter of the 9th instant.⁽³⁾

The Potsdam interview still continues to occupy the press a great deal, both here and elsewhere. I have tried to obtain such information as was possible here with regard to what took place between Sazonoff and Kiderlen-Waechter, but I find it very difficult to get at the bottom of what passed between them. When I touched upon this subject to Aehrenthal, he became mute and mysterious; from Dr. Szeps, however, the editor of the "Fremdenblatt," I learn that Kiderlen-Waechter, previous to the meeting, informed Aehrenthal of the subjects which he proposed to discuss with Sazonoff. This considerate conduct on the part of Germany has been much appreciated here. After the Potsdam meeting the Austrian Government were informed more or less of what had actually taken place there. Dr. Szeps tells me that quite at the end of the conversation, so the Austrian Government were informed, the Near Eastern question was just alluded to "en passant," in a sort of innocent, harmless and uncompromising manner. Dr. Szeps added to me, however, that the "Ballplatz" authorities strongly suspected that Kiderlen-Waechter assured Sazonoff that he was certain that Count Aehrenthal was determined to pursue a peaceful policy in the Near East, but that if under unforeseen circumstances he were to alter his policy in that direction, Germany would hold him back. . . .⁽⁴⁾

Yours truly,

FAIRFAX L. CARTWRIGHT.

(1) [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe. The endorsement is initialled by Sir Edward Grey.]

(2) [Carnock MSS, Vol. I of 1911.]

(3) [Not reproduced, as it adds nothing of importance to information given elsewhere. Carnock MSS, Vol. I of 1911.]

(4) [The rest of the letter refers to the relations between Vienna and Berlin, and the unpopularity of Count Aehrenthal. It adds nothing of importance to information given elsewhere.]

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

St. Petersburg, January 22, 1911.

2460/48/11/44.

D. 8.10 P.M.

Tel. (No. 18.) Secret.

R. 10.30 P.M.

Your despatch No. 19.⁽²⁾

Minister for Foreign Affairs, whom I saw yesterday, had not yet received Russian Ambassador in London's report of his conversation with you, and I therefore repeated to him what you had said.

His assurances with regard to the 4 per cent. customs increase were quite satisfactory.

He told me that he had stated at Potsdam that this was a question which concerned Russia's general policy and could not therefore form the subject of discussion between the two Governments.

I cannot, however, say the same as regards his language on the other points. He ridiculed the idea of the Khanikin-Tehran line ever being used for the transport of Turkish troops, and said that Russia was close by in the Caucasus and could always prevent it if danger really threatened.

As regards the neutral zone he merely repeated the arguments reported in my despatch No. 12, Secret.⁽³⁾ I fear from what I hear from another source that he contemplates ceding entirely to Germany the construction of the Khanikin-Tehran line. He is also being pressed by Germany to revise article 3 of the draft agreement⁽⁴⁾ so as to render it more palatable to the Turks. He told me that the German Ambassador had submitted a new text of that article, but that he had found it too vague. I warned him against accepting any text which could, like that of article 1, be interpreted in two different ways.

I shall see him again after receipt of the Russian Ambassador's report, but find it difficult to reconcile these fresh concessions to Germany with the language which he held to me on my arrival here.⁽⁵⁾

He then gave me to understand that Russia had been forced to consent to Germany's demands with regard to the Bagdad Railway in order to avert the danger of the concession of the Tehran-Khanikin branch ever falling into her hands, and to secure an engagement from her not to encourage the construction of any line between the Bagdad Railway and the Russian and Persian frontier to the north of Khanikin. He now seems about to surrender all that he was supposed to have won at Potsdam, and unless he has received some *quid pro quo* of which we are ignorant, he will come out of these negotiations almost empty-handed.

MINUTES.

The assurance respecting the 4 per cent. is the only satisfactory part of this telegram.

It really appears to be time to make use of the assurances given by the Emperor of Russia to Sir G. Buchanan. H[is] I[mperial] M[ajesty] can hardly be aware of what his Minister for F[oreign] A[ffairs] is doing.

H. N.

Jan[uary] 23, 1911.

It is new that the Germans are to have all the construction.

Enquire whether M. Sazonow contemplates giving any control to the Germans over the Tehran-Khanikin route, whether there will be German engineers and railway officials on the line, whether the construction of the line will affect the eventual construction of a Mohammerah-Julfa Line.

(1) [This telegram is endorsed as having been sent to the King. Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations; to the Committee of Imperial Defence]

(2) [*v. supra*, pp. 622-3, No. 653.]

(3) [*v. supra*, pp. 607-10, No. 643.]

(4) [*v. supra*, pp. 574-5, No. 618, *encl.*]

(5) [*v. supra*, pp. 572-3, No. 617]

If Germany were at war with Russia, it would not be so easy for Russia to oppose a Turkish advance into Persia and this question must be considered by the Defence Committee in connection with the Trans-Persian Line and Indian interests generally

L. M.

I think that it would be useless making for the moment any more enquiries of M. Sazonow. We have new surprises daily.

A. N

I have in conversation at Windsor with Count Benckendorff told him the rumour about the Teheran-Khanikin line.

E. G.

23.1.11.

No. 658.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

St. Petersburg, January 24, 1911.

2889/48/11/44.

D. 8.28 P.M.

Tel. (No. 19.) Secret.

R. 10.30 P.M.

My immediately preceding telegram.⁽²⁾

I saw Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs again last night and impressed on him importance of keeping the absolute control of the Khanikin-Tehran line in Russia's hands, pointing out that if he yielded on this point and at the same time failed to keep Germany to the engagements given in article 3⁽³⁾ he would have but little to show as a set-off for the concessions which he had made with regard to Bagdad Railway.

His Excellency replied that nothing had yet been settled, but that if he refused to fix any date for the construction of the lines in question Germany would have good grounds for thinking that Russia intended to postpone its construction indefinitely. On the other hand, the great expenditure involved made him loth to bind Russia down to any fixed term. I observed that if he allowed Germany to get control of this railway he would give her a footing in north of Persia, and the eventual consequence might be serious conflict of interests between the two Empires. His Majesty's Government would be only too glad were the negotiations now proceeding to lead to an arrangement satisfactory to Russia, but I (?) doubted whether such a result would be attained by a too ready compliance with all of Germany's demands. Minister for Foreign Affairs said he quite shared this view. He had, indeed, told German Ambassador yesterday that, while willing to modify text, he could not consent to any material change in article 3. Whole question of these railways was to be examined by a committee of military experts.

His Excellency subsequently spoke of the possibility of arranging that Russia should participate to the extent of 60 per cent. in the Khanikin-Tehran line, but I fear that he is not very sound on this question. He added that it was impossible to say at present what would be final outcome of the negotiations.

MINUTES.

Another climb-down; as M. Sazonow said at first, that he would not fix a date for the construction. Now he says that he must and that, owing to the great expenditure involved, he is going to give the line to Germany!

It is impossible to follow him. Perhaps the military experts will make a stand.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram is endorsed as having been sent to the King. Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations; to the Committee of Imperial Defence.]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

⁽³⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 574-5, No. 618, *encl.*]

I think that they should know that, if there is to be a German line, the fact will necessarily have to be taken into consideration in connection with the Trans-Persian Line

L. M.

A. N.

We had better not say anything more about the Trans-Persian line at the moment; we cannot press this point far without appearing to commit ourselves more than we are prepared to do to the Trans-Persian line. And I don't think it will avail to get M. Sazonow out of the difficulties in which he is involved with the Germans.

E. G.

No. 659.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

3401/48/11/44.

(No. 25.) Secret.

St. Petersburg, D. January 26, 1911.

Sir,

R. January 30, 1911.

The conversations which I have had with the Minister for Foreign Affairs during the past fortnight, and the language held to me by the Emperor on the Orthodox New Year's Day, confirm me in the belief that neither His Majesty nor His Foreign Minister contemplate giving any new direction to Russia's foreign policy. More than this it would be dangerous to say at the present moment, as it is impossible to predict what will be the final outcome of the negotiations now proceeding between Monsieur Sazonow and the German Ambassador. Those negotiations are being protracted to an extent which nobody foresaw when the former returned from Potsdam, jubilant at the concessions that he had obtained at such a trifling cost from Germany. It then seemed a very simple matter to record the respective concessions and counter-concessions in a diplomatic act, and when I first arrived at St. Petersburg he spoke of three weeks as being sufficient for the purpose. Nearly two months have now elapsed, and the end seems as far off as ever. It would indeed almost appear as if the language held by the German Chancellor at Potsdam has been purposely pitched in the softest of keys, so as to encourage Monsieur Sazonow in the belief that he was about to score a diplomatic success and thus to induce him to enter into negotiations from which he could not withdraw without risking the loss of his personal prestige. His Excellency, however, soon discovered to his cost that the assurances which he had given in the course of his conversations with Monsieur Bethmann-Hollweg and Monsieur Kiderlen were being given rather a larger interpretation than he had meant them to convey.

When I spoke to His Excellency early in December of the engagements which he had taken under Article II of the Draft Agreement, he told me that before he went to Potsdam the relations between the two Governments had been very strained and that he had lived in daily dread of learning that Germany had secured the concession for the Khanikin-Teheran Railway.⁽²⁾ In order to avoid this he had been forced to meet Germany's wishes with regard to the Bagdad Railway, though he had been careful not to pledge himself as to the term in which the latter was to be linked up with the future north Persian railway system. It is curious to compare this statement with the language which he has recently held now that Germany is insisting that a definite term shall be fixed for the construction of the line connecting Khanikin with Teheran. Germany, he explained to me a few days ago, was naturally anxious to secure an open door by which her trade might enter Persia, and could not be put off with a vague promise that the railway necessary

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Cabinet Committee; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe. Copies were sent to the Director of Military Operations; to the Committee of Imperial Defence.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 572, No. 617; p. 592, No. 631. *cp. also infra*, p. 634, No. 662.]

for this purpose would one day be built. He could not, consequently, refuse to specify the date at which this line should be commenced, but as its construction would entail a very heavy expenditure, he did not wish to pledge the Russian Government to commence building operations as soon as the line from Sadijeh had reached Khanikin. Why not, therefore, let the Germans themselves build the railway which was to give them access to the Persian markets? Such an arrangement would, he thought, be more acceptable to public opinion in this country than the expenditure of Russian capital on an undertaking which could only promote German interests.

I pointed out to His Excellency that the country which built the railway would control the railway. I also repeated to him what you had said to Count Benckendorff respecting the danger of the line being used in times of Panislamic excitement for the transport of Mussulman forces,⁽³⁾ and reminded him that when I had mentioned the subject to him on a former occasion, he had told me that the railway would be virtually under the control of Russia. I added that if he now handed over the railway to Germany, and if he further allowed Article III of the Draft Agreement to be amended in such a way as to enable Germany to evade her obligations not to promote the construction of any railways to the north of Khanikin, I failed to see what he would have obtained from Germany in return for all the concessions which he had made with regard to the Bagdad Railway.

I ought perhaps to explain that, in order to avoid useless repetition, I am summarising the various conversations which I have had with Monsieur Sazonow during the past fortnight, and that His Excellency is very prone to shift his ground. While he has consistently treated the danger to which you called Count Benckendorff's attention as a purely imaginary one, he has not been equally consistent in the arguments to which he has had recourse in order to disprove its existence. More than once he has contended that neither the Sadijeh-Khanikin nor the Khanikin-Teheran railways will ever exist except on paper, and that all that the German Government is aiming at is to obtain some assurance from Russia which will satisfy public opinion at home that everything is being done to safeguard Germany's economic interests in Persia. On one occasion, however, he adopted an entirely different line of argument. Russia, he said, was close by in the Caucasus, and we therefore had nothing to fear, as on the first indication of such a danger she would at once send her troops to Teheran. This remark is very characteristic of the light-hearted manner in which His Excellency regards the very serious consequences which the engagements which he is now about to make may eventually entail. It was in much the same spirit that he recently said to me that we could always oppose the construction of the final section of the Bagdad Railway by sending ironclads to the Gulf.

In the conversation which I reported in my telegram No. 19, Secret, of the 24th instant⁽⁴⁾ I endeavoured once more to impress on him the importance of keeping the absolute control of the Khanikin-Teheran railway in the hands of Russia. Were the Indian Government, I said, to learn that Germany was to acquire the right to construct and control that line, they would be far less likely to take a favourable view of the trans-Persian railway scheme. It was, moreover, surely not in the interests of Russia to give Germany a footing in north Persia which might undermine Russia's influence at Teheran and occasion serious friction between the two Empires. His Majesty's Government, I added, would be only too glad were the negotiations now proceeding to result in an arrangement satisfactory to Russia, but I ventured to doubt whether such a result would be obtained by a too ready compliance with all of Germany's demands.

Monsieur Sazonow did not attempt to rebut these arguments and acquiesced entirely in my last remark. He had, he said, informed the German Ambassador

⁽³⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 622-3, No. 653]

⁽⁴⁾ [v. immediately preceding document]

on the previous day that, while ready to consider an amended text of Article III, he could not entertain any proposal that would in any way weaken the material effect of that Article. It is satisfactory to know that on this point at any rate Monsieur Sazonow proposes to take a firm stand; and it is not improbable that pressure is being brought to bear on him by the military authorities, who will, as he tells me, have to examine the railway question from the strategic point of view. As regards the question of the control of the Khanikin-Teheran line, I fear that His Excellency is far from sound, though the last thing which he said to me on the subject was that it might be possible to arrange that Russia should participate to the extent of sixty per cent. in its construction and thus retain the predominant control.

From the assurances which Monsieur Sazonow has given me there can, I think, be no doubt that His Excellency has not in any way committed himself in the question of the four per cent. increase of the Turkish customs dues. He has always told me that the statement made in Article 1 of the Draft Agreement that no pecuniary sacrifice was to be required from Russia, was specially inserted in order to leave her a perfectly free hand with regard to this question. He has also informed me that he had explained at Potsdam that as this was a question which concerned Russia's general foreign policy, it could not form one of the subjects of discussion between the two Governments. He has more than once tried to argue, in defence of the engagement which he has taken not to oppose the realisation of the Bagdad Railway, that neither England, Russia nor France has ever directly opposed that scheme and that they have only offered it a negative opposition by declining to give it their financial support. As the proposed increase in the customs dues cannot be enforced without their consent they still possess, as he believes, a very effective weapon for opposing the completion of the Railway to the Gulf. He mentioned to me the other day that he had heard that there was an English project for a railway from Mohammerah to Khanikin, and he strongly advised us to give it our support. It could, he believed, be built entirely on Persian territory, and its construction might prove fatal to the continuation of the Bagdad Railway beyond that town. I said that I had never heard of the projected railway, but that I rather doubted whether, if it were constructed, the Germans would ever renounce the idea of bringing the Bagdad Railway down to the Gulf.

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

P.S.—Since writing the above Mr. O'Beirne has called my attention to his despatch No. 436 Confidential of the 2nd November⁽⁵⁾ last, in which he reported the suggestion made by Monsieur Iswolsky that Russia should agree that, if she did not construct the Khanikin-Teheran railway within a specified number of years, Germany should regain her liberty of action in the matter. As I was dining with Monsieur Sazonow last night, I asked him whether he thought it would be possible to amend Article II in the sense that if, when the line from Sadijeh had reached Khanikin, Russia had not commenced the construction of the Khanikin-Teheran line, she should come to an understanding with Germany for a joint construction of the latter railway. Monsieur Sazonow replied that he had only yesterday been considering whether an arrangement of this kind might not be possible, but that he rather doubted whether Germany would consent to it.

G. W. B.

MINUTES.

This despatch is largely recapitulatory.

It is well that M. Sazonow should remain firm about Article 3 (if in the end he does so)—though that concerns Russian interests more closely than our own—and also that he is sound on the question of the 4 per cent.

(5) [*v. supra*, pp. 555-6, No. 604.]

I never heard of the proposed Mohammera-Khanikin Railway (in *Persian* territory) though there has been a question of a Tigris Valley Railway in *Turkish* territory): but I think advantage might be taken of M. Sazonow's willingness to see us embark on such a scheme by getting him to view favourably an immediate application by us to the Persian Gov[ernmen]t for the right to build what railways we want including one part of the Mohammera-Julfa line (which would not be so very different from a Mohammera-Khanikin line).

We might suggest this to the India Office.

The suggestion in the postscript, if I understand it rightly, appears rather dangerous unless the number of years was very great, for Russia would be most unlikely to build the Khanikin-Tehran line soon and if she did not Germany, in spite of our warnings to Persia and her own disclaimers of political designs, would have the right to come in.

H. N.

Jan[uary] 30, 1911.

M. Sazonow is probably confusing the Mohammerah-Julfa line with Mohammerah-Khanikin — i.e. he has a mistaken idea of the Mohammerah-Julfa project.

If this is the case it is something gained that he would favour our asking for the line at all events up to the limit of the Russian zone.

R. P. M.

A very good despatch.

See minute on 3623;(6) and further minutes over.

L. M.

E. G.

Sir E. Grey,

Mr. Hirtzel pressed at a meeting which Mr. Parker and I had with him to-day that we should reconsider our decision not to allow the survey of the Mohammerah line from Dizful to Burujird. He is strongly in favour of the construction of a line northward from Mohammerah, in which Mr. Parker and I concurred. As M. Sazonow has now invited us to undertake this line the fear of objection from Russia need not deter us from the survey.

As Mr. Wilson is on the spot, it might be well to utilize his services.

Qy. Inform I[ndia] O[ffice] that in consequence of M. Sazonow's communications we no longer object and will apply to the Treasury for $\frac{1}{2}$ the expenses.

L. M.

A. N.

Certainly we can now go on with this.

E. G.

(6) [*v. infra*, pp. 637-9, No. 664, mins.]

No. 660.

Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

3278/48/11/44.

(No. 50.) Confidential.

Paris, D. January 26, 1911.

Sir,

R. January 28, 1911.

I gave to the Minister for Foreign Affairs to-day an account of your conversations with the French and Russian Ambassadors as recorded in your despatches of the 18th instant, viz., to me No. 28,⁽²⁾ Secret, and to Sir George Buchanan No. 19,⁽³⁾ Secret, omitting any reference to the possible participation of Germany in the Teheran-Khanikin Railway, and avoiding any mention of Persia and the neutral zone. M. Pichon had received a full account from the French Ambassador in London of his conversations with you. He entirely concurs in all your observations to Count Benckendorff. He has already spoken to M. Isvolsky much to the same effect, and he will do so again.

M. Pichon's opinion is that M. Sazonow from his want of experience in negotiation and his awkwardness has been bested by the German Government and

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 624-5, No. 654.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 622-3, No. 653.]

has committed himself in the matter of the Bagdad Railway in a manner which is detrimental to the position of France and England in further negotiations on the subject, but he agrees with M. Cambon that what M. Sazonow has done must be written off as a bad debt and the French and British Governments must now keep closely in touch with each other and keep M. Sazonow to his promises in regard to the additional 4% Turkish Customs and prevent him from making further backslidings.

M. Pichon then told me that, having learnt from the French Ambassador at St. Petersburg that there was an inclination on the part of M. Sazonow to allow Germany to construct a railway from Khanikin to Teheran, he had instructed M. Louis to remind M. Sazonow that in order to back up the policy of Russia and England in Persia the French Government had refused to comply with the application of the Persian Government for the services of French advisers, and they had abstained from applying for concessions in the north of Persia, and that it was straining complacency too far for the Russian Government to expect that in return for meeting the wishes of the Russian Government the French Government could accept that Germany should be introduced into Persia as a wedge between Russia and England.

I have, &c.

FRANCIS BERTIE.

MINUTES.

The last paragraph is especially interesting and must be borne in mind, if negotiations are undertaken with Germany about Persia. Whatever we give to Germany in the way of concessions for railways or percentages of construction must be given also to France.

Now that matters have gone so far, I do not see how we can retain Persia as a preserve for Great Britain and Russia. Our strategical position is secured by our sphere.

We must endeavour to secure as equal, if not preferential advantages for our trade in the neutral zone

L. M.

We can decide on nothing until the negotiations between Russia and Germany are finally concluded and we see exactly where we stand. It is quite possible that the negotiations may break down over Art[icle] III.

A. N.
E. G.

No. 661.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Private.⁽²⁾

My dear Sir Edward,

St. Petersburg, January 26, 1911.

I am very much obliged to you for your private letters of the 7th⁽³⁾ and 14th⁽⁴⁾ instant.

I rather gather from a conversation which I had with Timiriazeff some little time ago, that what he told Sazonow about the views held in political and financial circles in London respecting the character of the projected trans-Persian railway had reference rather to the constitution of the "Comité d'Etudes" than to the railway itself. I am afraid that Timiriazeff is a friend of Gwinner's and is rather inclined to favour giving the Germans a large participation in the railway. He told me that Gwinner was prepared to pay down a quarter of the money required for the expenses of the Comité d'Etudes.⁽⁵⁾

I repeated to Sazonow the other day what you had written to me respecting the control of the railway in our sphere of influence in Persia. He at once said

⁽¹⁾ [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to the Prime Minister and to Lord Crewe.]

⁽²⁾ [Grey MSS., Vol. 35.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 604-5, No. 639.]

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 617, No. 648.]

⁽⁵⁾ [*cp. infra*, pp. 640-1, No. 667.]

that this could easily be arranged; that Russia would in any case require to control the railway in her own sphere, and that only that part of it which ran through the neutral zone need have an international character. I do not know how far the idea of Russia having complete control of the railway in her much larger sphere of influence meets with your approval—so I thought it better to say nothing.

You will have learnt from my private telegram of the 22nd instant⁽⁶⁾ that I have communicated to Sazonow what you told me with regard to our relations with Germany, on the understanding that he would repeat it to nobody except the Emperor. The assurances which my communication elicited from him and which I have already telegraphed to you are most satisfactory, and I do not for a moment doubt their sincerity. It is only unfortunate that he is so lamentably weak in his dealings with the Germans, and that he will not reflect on the serious consequences which may result at no very distant future from the concessions which he is constantly making them. I have had to be rather outspoken with him in my recent conversations; but my relations with him are fortunately of the friendliest character, and he always takes my observations in good part.

Sazonow tells me that he hopes to go to London early in May⁽⁷⁾ and that he will then be able to tell you many curious details with regard to the Potsdam meeting. I hope that you will remind him of this promise when he comes, as it will be interesting to find out what he has kept back from us.

Yours sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

⁽⁶⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 617, No. 648, note ⁽²⁾]

⁽⁷⁾ [M. Sazonov's visit to England took place from September 20 to October 2, 1912. *cp. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (I), pp. 749-72, Chapter LXXVIII.]

No. 662.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir A. Nicolson.⁽¹⁾

Private.⁽²⁾

My dear Nicolson,

St. Petersburg, January 26, 1911.

Many thanks for your letter by last bag.⁽³⁾

I have had several conversations with Sazonow during the last fortnight, and have directed all my efforts to trying to prevent him making further concessions to the Germans. He is, as you know, a most pleasant man to talk to and does not mind my being perfectly frank and outspoken with him. This is very fortunate, as when one considers the extraordinary "volte-face" he has made during the past six weeks with regard to some of the points dealt with in the Draft Agreement, it is impossible to sit still and say nothing. Almost the first time I saw him he spoke to me of the daily terror in which he had lived before he went to Potsdam lest the telegraph should announce that Germany had obtained the concession for the Khanikin-Teheran line. It was this that obliged him to meet her wishes with regard to the Bagdad Railway—and now he has actually contemplated giving her that concession himself. I hope that he will think the better of it and that he will at any rate try to keep a predominant share for Russia, so as to prevent the control falling into Germany's hands; but at one time the language which he held led both me and Louis to fear that he was abandoning it altogether. When I spoke to him of the danger of a German controlled line serving for the transport of Turkish

⁽¹⁾ [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe. The endorsement is initialled by Sir Edward Grey.]

⁽²⁾ [Carnock MSS., Vol. I of 1911.]

⁽³⁾ [Sir A. Nicolson's letter, of January 17, 1911, described the conversation with Count Benckendorff reported by Sir Edward Grey in his despatch (No. 19) of January 17. (*v. supra*, pp. 622-3, No. 653.) Carnock MSS., Vol. I of 1911.]

troops, he gaily said that there was no reason to fear that, as Russia would in that case at once dispatch troops to Teheran from the Caucasus. I replied that that would mean war, to which he answered "Yes—but not with Germany. Germany will never go to war about a Persian railway." I then pointed out to him that it could not be to Russia's interest to give Germany a footing in north Persia, as this would inevitably lead to a struggle for influence at Teheran between the two Governments and cause serious friction. This argument, I think, made some impression on him; but I feel that one must be continually at him, as he is so very deficient in backbone. He is quite sound on the question of the four per cent. Customs increase; and the assurances which he gave me, when I spoke to him about our relations with Germany, were as satisfactory as they could be. He is also, I am glad to say, going to keep Germany to her word as regards the railways referred to in Article III; but he is far too much inclined to believe all that Pourtales tells him. He again told me last night that Germany did not really contemplate building these railways, and only wanted to calm public opinion at home by securing an engagement from Russia that the door to the Persian markets is not to be shut in her face.

Revelstoke had his Audience with the Emperor on Monday, and was very pleased with his reception by His Majesty. The Emperor is sending by him a private letter to the King. I am very glad to hear this, as it will be of great advantage to us if the two Sovereigns are in constant correspondence with each other. Ambassadors have so few opportunities of seeing the Emperor that I can do but little to bring any influence to bear on His Majesty.

Everybody has been extraordinarily kind to us, and the Stolypines have gone out of their way to show us civility. They asked us to a small dance the other night, and he pointedly said to my wife that she would no doubt have remarked that we were the only foreigners present. I hope that we may regard this as an evidence of his friendly sentiments towards our country.

I have nothing further to add to my telegrams and despatches so will not write a long letter today.

Ever yours,

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

P.S. Louis has just been to see me and says that he had had several conversations with Russians who are interested in the Persian question, and that they all told him that public opinion here would never sanction the expenditure of Russian capital on the construction of a railway which, like the Teheran-Khanikin line, would only serve to promote German economic interests and compete with the future north Persian railway. He is therefore inclined to think that Sazonow has been influenced by the views held in industrial circles at home rather than that he has yielded to German pressure. The railway will, he says, cost about a hundred million roubles, and the persons with whom he has talked declare that it would be much better for Russia to let Germany build the railway, if she wishes to, though they much doubt whether she would ever be able to find the necessary capital. Sazonow has more than once spoken to me in the same sense, but I always thought that he was trying to veil his weakness under the cloak of Russian public opinion; but there may after all be something in it. If there is, it seems rather extraordinary that he did not consider this side of the question before he went to Berlin. Louis seems quite convinced that his view is correct and says that he is much relieved. as he had been greatly alarmed at the lengths to which Sazonow was apparently prepared to go in his negotiations with Pourtales.

The more one hears of the present negotiations, the more difficult it is to predict how they will all end. I cannot see how the Germans can sign an Agreement, in which Article III respecting railways to the north of Khanikin is retained after the explicit assurances which Marschall is said to have given to Rifaat Pasha on the subject; while on the other hand Sazonow declares that he cannot consent

to any material change in it. Things therefore rather look as if they were coming to an *impasse*. If after all Sazonow does give way on this point, Russia will gain nothing worth mentioning by the Agreement.

G. W. B.

[*ED. NOTE.*—In a letter of January 27, 1911, Count Benckendorff reported a conversation with King George V at Windsor on January 26. *v. Siebert*, pp. 539-41.]

No. 663.

Sir F. Cartwright to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1287.

Vienna, January 27, 1911.

3230/48/11/44.

D. 2-50 P.M.

Tel. (No. 11.) Most Confidential.

R. 4 P.M.

I have received following information from a most confidential source. A growing uneasiness exists at Ministry for Foreign Affairs with regard to what took place at Potsdam meeting and as to the course which is being taken by the negotiations now pending between Germany and Russia. This uncertainty and the delay in arriving at conclusion of negotiations is considered to retard any possible rapprochement between Austria-Hungary and Russia, for here they are determined not to allow such a rapprochement to appear evolved out of *pourparlers* now going on between St. Petersburg and Berlin. Dissatisfaction prevails at Ministry for Foreign Affairs here against Russian M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] who, it is suspected, is playing a double game.

On Count von Aehrenthal asking the German Ambassador here causes of the slow progress of negotiations latter replied that delay was caused not by Russia but by Germany owing to subjects dealt with covering wider field than the points mentioned in disclosures of the "Evening News." Germany therefore required time to consider these questions carefully.

At the Ministry for Foreign Affairs they are in doubt as to whether the German Ambassador said this to hide the fact that Russia is drawing back from the negotiations.

Austrian Ambassador at St. Petersburg reports that on alluding to Potsdam interview to Russian M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] latter replied that Russia was mistress of her own policy, and that French anxieties with regard to Potsdam interview would sooner or later calm down.

MINUTES.

According to the German Ambassador at Vienna, the Russo-German negotiations cover a wider field than we knew, which is disquieting, unless the hypothesis advanced at the Ballplatz is correct.

This is perhaps too vague to be worth repeating, interesting though it is.

H. N.

Jan[uary] 27, 1911.

It would interest St. Petersburg, Berlin and Paris.

R. P. M.

L. M.

A. N.

E. G.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram is endorsed as having been sent to the King. It was sent to St. Petersburg (as No. 219); to Berlin (as No. 28); to Paris (as No. 42). A copy was sent to the India Office.]

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

St. Petersburg, January 30, 1911.

3623/48/11/44.

D. 8.34 P.M.

Tel. (No. 22.) Secret.

R. 10 P.M.

Minister for Foreign Affairs informs me that Minister of Finance refuses to take any financial responsibility for eventual construction of Tehran-Khanikin line, but that he himself wants to secure Russian participation to the extent of 60 per cent. Failing this, he will try to conclude some such arrangement as that referred to in the postscript of my despatch No. 25 Secret.⁽²⁾ Germany, he says, is ready to allow Russia either to build the line alone or conjointly with her, or to make arrangements to build it herself. In the latter case she would accord Russia right to purchase line when constructed at a price to be settled by arbitration.

As regards article 3, German Ambassador had told him that under the Bagdad Railway concession Germany had engaged to build certain branch railways. His Excellency said that one of these was to run from a junction on the Bagdad Railway to Diarbekir and Kharput, and that if the others, which he had not had time to examine, also ran parallel to Russian frontier he might make an exception in their favour, but that he could not do so in the case of railways running in direction of that frontier.

MINUTES.

If the Minister of Finance will not pay the prospects of Russia constructing the line are small.

As for the proposed arrangement in lieu of Russian participation, please see the despatch referred to.

There is but little, apparently, left of Art[icle] 3.

H. N.

Jan[uary] 31, 1911.

R. P. M.

This paper has been referred to me for observations by Mr. Mallet: I minute it with some diffidence, partly because I am so much occupied in getting up other important questions (e.g. the Declaration of London and the Flushing fortifications)⁽³⁾ in my own Department that I cannot follow in detail the Middle East negotiations; and principally because I do feel very strongly indeed that our policy in regard to these negotiations should not be merely passive and expectant,—but since my previous minutes to this effect have not been approved, I am not sure whether insistence from my subordinate position will be welcomed.

A policy of waiting on developments—of “masterly inactivity”—is to my mind, in the present instance, fundamentally vicious and foredoomed to failure: it is so firstly because it is most likely to bring disaster to our position and interests in the Middle East, and secondly because it will create a positive source of discord, a state of affairs directly menacing to peace.

If the Russo-German negotiations terminate as at present indicated we shall have what will shortly become a Turco-German hegemony at Tehran,—resting as it will upon through railway communication under German and Turkish control from the Bosphorus to Tehran. We know already how for years the Germans have been urging forward the Turks at Vazné and other strategical points on the Turco-Persian frontier, and how the Turks have carried on revolutionary intrigues at Tabriz and otherwise shown themselves unfriendly in Persia.

If through railway communication is established from Turkey to Tehran under such control as indicated there will result a radical alteration, to our detriment, in the balance of power in those regions: and in moments of pan-Islamic agitation, as at the time of the Akaba incident, the anxieties of the military authorities in India will be intensified by the knowledge that a concentration of Ottoman troops at Tehran is possible from Van and Mosul by rail almost before those movements are known outside the Turkish Empire.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe. It was sent to Tehran. Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations; to the Committee of Imperial Defence.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 631, No. 659.]

⁽³⁾ [A long memorandum by Mr. Parker on the proposal to fortify Flushing is printed in *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. VIII, pp. 696-704, No. 590. It is dated January 30, 1911.]

What are the hard facts of the situation? Although the question of railway concessions in Persia was carefully worked out by Sir C Hardinge in October 1908,⁽¹⁾ and laid before M. Isvolsky, we have at the present time no clear scheme of positive action in regard to concessions for ourselves in Persia; while in regard to the Bagdad Railway our policy has been purely negative, except for conveying to Turkey last April a threat which we have omitted to carry out.⁽²⁾

On the other hand Germany holds the Bagdad Railway concession, and holds also valuable treaty rights in Persia: she not only holds these rights but she is turning them to account.

The whole question may be one of the law of values, and it is conceivable that we are playing in any case a losing game: but even if this is so we stand to lose more by negative and expectant policy than by having a clear conception of the bargain we wish to make and acting accordingly.

The present juncture is clearly a most critical one: and I would submit that we should either seize or create an opportunity to intervene in our own interests.

There are three alternative courses which are open to us:—

1) We can adopt M. Sazonow's advice and promote an English railway from Mohammerah to the north. This is of course part of the policy of earmarking concessions in Persia

2) We can open negotiations with the German Gov[ernmen]t for a settlement of the whole question of railway construction in the Middle East

3) We can seize the present opportunity, and inform M. Sazonow that we have learnt with grave apprehension of the proposal that Germany should construct, and virtually control, the line from Khanikin to Tehran, and indicate to H[is] E[xc]ellency the objections to such an arrangement from the point of view of British Indian interests, political and strategical. We can suggest that it would be more in accordance with the spirit of the Anglo-Russian Convention⁽³⁾ if, since Russia cannot herself build the line, she were to offer H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] a share in it before surrendering it to Germany. Russia's financial embarrassment may prove our opportunity. Russia might be asked to point out to Germany that the British Gov[ernmen]t were seriously disturbed by the change in the political situation in Persia which would be involved in the proposed arrangement about the Tehran-Khanikin line, and to indicate to Germany that the most convenient and satisfactory settlement of the whole question would be to come to a general agreement between the three Powers as to railway construction in the Middle East. If we do not come to an agreement now about these matters, and allow Germany and Russia first to come to a definite and signed agreement, our position for negotiation with Germany will be immeasurably weaker than it is at present: but it would be worse than useless to take the proposed step at St. Petersburg until we have precisely determined what we want,—a decision which, as regards Germany, has evidently been taken at Berlin as part of a well-considered, clear-cut, and comprehensive policy in those regions

A. P.

January 31st, 1911.

I entirely agree with Mr. Parker.

E. A. C.

Jan[uary] 31.

I think that Mr. Parker has overlooked the fact that you have put forward our objection to a German built and controlled Railway from Khanikin to Tehran rigorously on several occasions and that, on the last occasion, M. Sazonow laughed at our apprehension.⁽⁷⁾ In the despatch accompanying this telegram, Sir G. Buchanan summarizes his own frequent representations on this subject very clearly and I cannot think that we have neglected this important question. The proposal referred to in the postscript of the despatch might provide a solution and it would perhaps be worth supporting by tel[egram] as follows]. . . .⁽⁸⁾

I am entirely opposed to approaching Germany ourselves, as Mr. Parker proposes.⁽⁹⁾ Such a course would at once put us at a disadvantage and would make the German Gov[ernmen]t raise their terms. I am not in favour of participation in the Bagdad Railway at all costs. I agree in the importance of making up our minds now as to what we want but this was raised in a Minute which I sent to you 10 days ago upon which you authorized us to discuss the whole question with the I[ndia] O[ffice] at once.⁽¹⁰⁾ We have only been prevented from doing so by the absence of Mr. Hirtzel. He is now back and I propose to appoint an interview at an early date.

L. M.

(4) [*cp. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. VI, p. 452, No. 343, *min.*, and *note* (3)]

(5) [*v. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. VI, p. 474, No. 357.]

(6) [*v. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IV, pp. 618–20, *App. I.*]

(7) [*cp. supra*, p. 627, No. 657.]

(8) [The draft of a telegram follows here. It is printed *infra*, p. 642, No. 669.]

(9) [Marginal comment by Mr. A. Parker: "My intention was not to propose it as I am myself opposed to it. I only desired to enumerate the alternative courses open to us. A. P."]

(10) [*cp. supra*, p. 614, No. 645, *min.*]

I have discussed these energetic minutes with Sir A. Nicolson and Mr Mallet. We can follow up the telegram to Sir G. Buchanan by putting in a note to the Persian Gov[ernment]t claiming preference, if railway concessions are given to foreigners by Persian Gov[ernment]t, for certain railways which we must define in the note.

E. G.

No. 665.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 871/1237.

2460/48/11/44.

(No. 81.) Secret.

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 31, 1911.

I have received your Excellency's despatch No. 12, Secret, of the 10th,⁽²⁾ and telegram No. 18, Secret, of the 22nd instant,⁽³⁾ reporting conversations with the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs on the subject of the negotiations now in progress between the Russian and German Governments on certain questions connected with the Near East.

As regards the reasons given to you by M. Sazonow for the inclusion in the part of Persia dealt with in the draft agreement of a portion of the region left neutral by the Anglo-Russian arrangement respecting Persia, you should inform his Excellency that I appreciate the reasons which have led him to follow this course, especially as I rest assured that the Russian Government would not support the requests of third parties for concessions in that region, nor even consent to such requests being made without previous consultation with His Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.

E. GREY.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King. Copies were sent to the Director of Military Operations; to the Committee of Imperial Defence; to the India Office. The text given above is taken from the *Confidential Print*, as the original draft cannot be traced.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 607-10, No. 643.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 627, No. 657.]

No. 666.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 871/1237.

8724/48/11/44.

(No. 92.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 31, 1911.⁽²⁾

Count Benckendorff asked me to-day whether I had any further information as to the Russo-German negotiations.

I said that I had now heard that M. Sazonow thought it possible that he might be pressed by Germany to agree to make the Khanikin connection within a definite time. If this was so, it might be convenient to ease the financial burden, which would be imposed on Russia, by getting Germany to undertake the construction of the line from Tehran to Khanikin. Germany had now denied categorically to the Turkish Government the provision of Article 3 of the draft which had become

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Cabinet Committee, i.e., to the Prime Minister, to Lord Crewe, to Lord Morley, to Mr. Lloyd George, to Mr. Runciman. Copies were sent to the Committee of Imperial Defence; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [The draft of this despatch was originally dated January 27, 1911.]

public, binding her not to make any railways in Asia Minor north of Khanikin. The urgency of preventing Germany from getting concessions for railways in northern Persia had been pleaded by M. Sazonow originally as the necessity for promising the Khanikin junction. The promise of Germany not to apply for railway concessions in northern Persia, and to refrain from making railways north of Khanikin in Asia Minor, had appeared to be the "quid pro quo" which Russia received for the concession she had made. It looked now as if the "quid pro quo" was disappearing altogether, and generally the negotiations seemed to be in a very fluid state.

Count Benckendorff was evidently not satisfied by the prospect, and asked me whether I had said anything at St. Petersburg.

I replied that I felt that the construction of railways in the northern part of Asia Minor and in the north of Persia was a matter which concerned the Russian Government much more than us. The point which I regarded as one for me to press at St. Petersburg was that the Russian Government should keep themselves free to give us support, when necessary, to secure reasonable terms respecting the Bagdad Railway. The essential thing in this connection was the consent to the 4% increase of Turkish Customs Dues. It would be disastrous if M. Sazonow were to give away this in the course of his negotiations.

Count Benckendorff said that he assumed that it was out of the question that this point should be given up.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

No. 667.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1176.

5152/1/11/44.

(No. 29.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, D. January 31, 1911.

R. February 13, 1911.

The following Official Communiqué was published in the Press of the 28th instant:—

"Amongst other questions discussed at the meeting of the Council of Ministers on January 13/26 was that of the construction of an Indo-European transit railway.

"The Council was generally favourable to the proposal brought forward by the promoters of the enterprise that a special commission (Société d'Études)⁽²⁾ should be instituted for a preliminary study of the question, on the understanding, however, that the realisation of the scheme shall not involve loss to the Russian Treasury or damage the economic interests of Russia.

"The decision of the Council of Ministers on this subject will take final shape as soon as the Ministries interested have arrived at an agreement."

On my alluding to this communiqué in the course of conversation with M. Sazonow yesterday, I enquired whether the condition that the Imperial Treasury was to suffer no loss meant that the Government would only give the projected railway their moral support, His Excellency replied that anything in the shape of a Government guarantee was out of the question. The only financial support, which

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been seen at Berlin.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 633, No. 661.]

the enterprise would receive, would be a certain share in any surplus profits, which might accrue to the State Railways from increased receipts due to the transit traffic in goods and passengers through Russia.

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

MINUTES

The absence of a Gov[ernmen]t guarantee will retard the realisation of the project.

H. N.
Feb[ruary] 13, 1911.
R. P. M.

The scheme may be considered as dead.

L. M.
A. N.
E. G.

No. 668.

Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

3856/48/11/44.

Tel. (No. 4.) Confidential.

Russia and Germany.

Paris, February 1, 1911.

D. 7.35 P.M.

R. 10 P.M.

Minister for Foreign Affairs showed to me this afternoon a telegram from the French Ambassador at St. Petersburg reporting a conversation with Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, according to which the latter informed him that he hoped that an agreement would be concluded with Germany, but that article 3 in the draft agreement, by which German Government was to bind itself not to construct or support applications for railway between Bagdad line and the Russian and Persian frontiers, was a military necessity for Russia, and must be a *sine qua non*; that the importance of Russian commerce in the north of Persia had been very much exaggerated; that neither the Russian Government nor the Duma would be prepared to make pecuniary sacrifices for the construction of the Khanikin-Tehran Railway, for there was no intention of repeating the Manchurian and Eastern Chinese Railway blunders; that as the Khanikin-Tehran Railway was an essential part of the agreement for the Germans, it would probably be advisable to allow Germany to construct it, or, what would be better, to reserve for Russia a 60 per cent share in it, and so give Russian Government a controlling power in the railway if means could be devised for raising necessary funds without putting any charge on the Russian Government.

French Minister for Foreign Affairs is very much perturbed at trend of these Russo-German negotiations, and he intends to make representations on the subject to the Russian Ambassador. He says that if Germany is to be allowed any participation in railway construction in Northern Persia it should only be in conjunction with other Powers, including France.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe. It was sent to St. Petersburg (as No. 25); to Tehran (as No. 30). Copies were sent to the Director of Military Operations; to the Committee of Imperial Defence.]

MINUTES

We have already made a suggestion of the kind respecting the construction and control of the Tehran-Khanikin line (see tel[egram] No 21 to Sir G. Buchanan)⁽²⁾ A copy of this telegram will go to Paris by bag to-night. We might tell Sir F. Bertie to inform M. Pichon of the steps which we have taken at St. Petersburg as set forth in it.

H. N.

Feb[ruary] 2, 1911.

A. P.

R. P. M.

It will help our suggestion considerably if the French support it.
Tel[egram] to Sir F. Bertie⁽³⁾

My tel[egram] No. 21 to Sir G. Buchanan and your tel[egram]s Nos 4 and 5⁽¹⁾ You may inform the M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] of this proposal contained in my tel[egram] No. 21 to Sir G. Buchanan.

We attach great importance to the point and the support of M. Pichon would be valuable. The point is that Teheran-Khanikin branch had better be Russian, but if not it should be international to extent which M. Pichon proposes. We could adopt same view later for railways in Southern Persia, substituting "British" for "Russian."

L. M.

A. N.

E. G.

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately succeeding document.]

⁽³⁾ [This telegram was sent to Paris (as No. 13) on February 2, 1911. It was sent to St. Petersburg (as No. 26); to Tehran (as No. 30). (FO 371/1237. 3856/48/11/44.)]

⁽⁴⁾ [v. *infra*, p. 643, No. 670.]

No. 669.

Sir E. Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

3623/48/11/44.

Tel. (No. 21.) Secret.

Foreign Office, February 1, 1911.

Your desp[atch] No. 25 secret⁽²⁾ and telegram No. 22 secret.⁽³⁾

I entirely approve your language respecting Tehran-Khanikin line. I attach the greatest importance to Russian construction and control and strongly hope that if M. Sazonow is not prepared to insist on this, he will adopt proposal referred to in the postscript of your despatch. If the line is built entirely by Germany it may any day be at disposal of Turks for aggressive purposes. M. Sazonow suggested some time ago that we might participate in the construction of the Tehran-Khanikin Line. British Capital would probably be forthcoming, if M. Sazonow's difficulty is financial, especially if Russia retained the option of construction for a certain time. There would be no necessity to mention this to Germany who could not object to a certain delay, as it will be some time before the Sadijeh branch is begun.

Another alternative would be to internationalize the line by the admission of French capital also. Giving Germany 30%, the rest could be reserved to Russia who would divide her share with us and France.

Both these proposals would turn the financial difficulty. I much hope that M. Sazonow will seriously consider these alternatives, as I attach far greater importance than he does to the Turkish danger and am surprised at his indifference on this point especially considering the failure of our endeavour to induce the Turks to withdraw from the Urmia district and apprehension which M. Sazonow has always expressed of Turkish railways in Asia Minor directed towards Russian frontier.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram is endorsed as having been sent to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe. It was repeated to Tehran. Copies were sent to the Director of Military Operations; to the Committee of Imperial Defence.]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 629-31, No 659.]

⁽³⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 637, No. 664.]

[ED. NOTE—Mr Lindley's despatch (No 14), D. February 1, R. February 6, 1911, reported the departure of M. Tcharykov from Sofia for Vienna a week previously. It stated further that, according to information received from a foreign diplomat, a conversation had taken place between King Ferdinand and M. Tcharykov, the tenour of which was that "in future, Balkan affairs were to be settled between Russia and Germany." King Ferdinand was said to have commented "that, *mutatis mutandis*, similar language had been held to him at the time of the Murzsteg programme," and to have drawn the conclusion that Russia was now "contemplating a forward policy in Persia," as she had then in Manchuria. (F.O. 371/1244. 4306/4306/11/44.)]

No. 670.

Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

3940/48/11/44.

Tel. (No. 5.)

Paris, February 2, 1911.

D. 9.55 A.M.

R. 11.30 P.M.

Confidential. Feb[ruary] 1st. My telegram No. 4.⁽²⁾

Russia and Germany. French M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] told me tonight that he had read to Russian Ambassador the telegraphic report from the French Ambassador at St. Petersburg of his conversation with Russian M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs]. M. Isvolsky was not able to give any satisfactory explanations. French M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] reminded him that France in order to conform with policy of Russia had refrained from applying for any concessions in northern Persia and had refused to supply French advisers and said that he could not justify to Parliament French abstention if it was to result in Germany stepping in as a wedge between Russia and England. Russian M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] had not communicated in any way with the French Gov[ernment] before committing himself to the German Gov[ernment] and position was very unsatisfactory. French M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] suggested to M. Isvolsky as a personal idea that, rather than that the Khanikin-Tehran railway should be a German or a Germano-Russian undertaking, it would be better that it should be constructed by a Russian-German-French-British combination.

I told French M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] that we were precluded by our agreement with Russia from obtaining concessions in northern Persia and that if we joined in a combination for the construction of the Khanikin-Tehran railway we might be expected to admit Russia and Germany in railway enterprises in southern Persia.

MINUTES.

The point raised by Sir F. Bertie in the last paragraph is important but I think the difficulty can be turned.

Great Britain, France and Germany would participate in the Khanikin-Tehran line to oblige Russia owing to Russia being unable to find the necessary capital herself, whereas presumably we should be able to find the capital for the lines in the south without asking France, Germany and Russia to oblige us. The case is therefore hardly one in which reciprocity is demanded.

H. N.

Feb[ruary] 2, 1911

I agree with Mr. Norman. I think it is hardly wise to have expressed the view in the last paragraph to M. Pichon. I hope with French support that we shall bring about internationalisation of the Tehran-Khanikin line.

[A. P.]

I hardly think that we need take up this point with Sir F. Bertie who will see from the Tel[egram]s and print what our view is.

L. M.

A. N.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe. It was sent to St. Petersburg (as No. 24); to Tehran (as No. 29). Copies were sent to the Director of Military Operations; to the Committee of Imperial Defence.]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 641, No. 668.]

The point we make is that if the Teheran-Khanikin branch is not to be Russian it had better be international, but Russia is the first choice for it; we could take the corresponding line about railways in Southern Persia; we being the first choice.

E. G.

No. 671.

Sir F. Cartwright to Sir A. Nicolson.⁽¹⁾

Private.⁽²⁾

My dear Nicolson,

Vienna, February 8, 1911.

...⁽³⁾ As to the Potsdam meeting there is little that is new to relate beyond the news I telegraphed home some days ago that at the "Ballplatz" a certain disquietude existed with regard to the delay which is evidently occurring in the conclusion of the negotiations between Germany and Russia.⁽⁴⁾ I have been confidentially informed that Aehrenthal asked Tschirschky what was the meaning of this delay, and that he replied that Germany was causing the delay because the programme of the negotiations was being considerably extended, and this necessitated more time for its proper consideration. It looks to me as if Sazonoff were drawing back somewhat from his first eagerness to conclude something with Germany, and that the Germans, noticing this, wish to hide the truth and to get the credit of being still the masters of the situation. I saw Giers immediately on my arrival here on returning from leave, and I then told him of the bad impression which had been produced in Paris by Sazonoff's precipitancy at Potsdam. I told him that I had seen men like Delcassé, Pichon and Briand, and that I thought that a still worse impression would be produced should by a "coup de théâtre" the relations between Petersburg and Vienna appear to be suddenly improved by something which might have occurred at Potsdam. I told him that as far as I knew neither in London nor in Paris any desire existed to see strained relations between Russia and the Dual Monarchy, but that a rapprochement between those two countries would scarcely be appreciated in France and in England if it had the appearance of having been brought about by the application of pressure exercised by Germany upon the two Powers. I had this conversation with M. de Giers six weeks ago, and he now tells me that he has received a letter from Sazonoff informing him that the Russian Government do not intend to improve the relations between Russia and Austria by a "Coup de théâtre," but that if they are to be mended this must come of itself and by slow stages.

Crozier, the French Ambassador, is of opinion that, taking all things into consideration, French public opinion will never be reassured as to how far Sazonoff has committed himself at Potsdam unless he accelerates his visit to Paris and to London, so that it should take place before and not after the conclusion of whatever negotiations may be taking place between Russia and Germany. If he comes to Paris after the conclusion of the negotiations, the French public will always be in doubt as to how far their Government were kept informed of the negotiations whilst they were pending, whereas, if the negotiations are concluded after his visit to Paris and to London, the German press will not be able to make out that Sazonoff and Kiderlen-Waechter settled the matter "à deux," and more or less without consulting any other Powers. Crozier has explained these views in a private telegram he sent last week to Pichon and which he read to me. For Crozier there are only

⁽¹⁾ [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe.]

⁽²⁾ [Carnock MSS, Vol. I of 1911.]

⁽³⁾ [The omitted paragraph refers to the general unpopularity of Count Aehrenthal with the Viennese press.]

⁽⁴⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 636, No. 663.]

two ways out of the present difficulty—either to accelerate Sazonoff's visit to Paris and to London, or for Russia to drag out the negotiations until the summer, by which time Sazonoff will have been able to visit London and Paris, and he can then conclude them after his return to Petersburg. . . .⁽⁵⁾

Yours truly,

FAIRFAX L. CARTWRIGHT.

⁽⁵⁾ [The rest of the letter refers to the Young Turkish *régime*, the relations of Austria-Hungary with Italy and other matters irrelevant to the present chapter.]

No. 672.

Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

4365/48/11/44.

Tel. (No. 6.) Secret.

Russia and Germany.

Paris, February 4, 1911.

D. 3.55 p.m.

R. 5.50 p.m.

Your telegram No. 13 of 2nd February,⁽²⁾ and telegrams therein referred to.

I made the communication to the Minister for Foreign Affairs this morning, but I did not tell him that we could adopt the same view later for railways in Southern Persia, substituting "British" for "Russian," for I did not find it necessary as he concurred in your views as stated in your telegram to St. Petersburg No. 21, Secret, of 1st February,⁽³⁾ and said that he would telegraph at once to the French Ambassador at St. Petersburg to act with and support the representations of His Majesty's Ambassador. He quite understands that it is only in the event of Russia relinquishing the option of constructing the Tehran-Khanikin line that it would be international.

French Minister for Foreign Affairs considers that the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs' proceedings and weakness in the hands of the Germans are deplorable, and he wonders whether there are some unavowed arrangements between the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs and them. He thinks it very desirable that public declarations should be made by you, himself, and the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs of the community of policy of France, England, and Russia. He has made a suggestion to that effect to the Russian Ambassador, who, at the French Minister for Foreign Affairs' request, has promised to transmit it direct to the Emperor of Russia. He does not, however, feel confident that M. Isvolsky will carry out his promise even if he have the means.

I suggested to the Minister for Foreign Affairs that, however willing the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs might be himself, if a free agent, to make such a declaration, his negotiations with the Germans might be an obstacle to his doing so at present.

MINUTES.

M. Pichon's attitude at any rate is satisfactory but M. Sazonow will be afraid to make any declaration at present.

H. N.

Feb[ruary] 6, 1911.

R. P. M.

L. M.

A. N.

M.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe. It was sent to St. Petersburg (as No. 33); to Tehran (as No. 40) on February 6, D. 3.45 p.m.; to Berlin on February 7.]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 641-2, No. 668, *min.*, and *note* ⁽³⁾.]

⁽³⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 642, No. 669.]

No. 673.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

4364/48/11/44.

Tel. (No. 26.)

St. Petersburg, February 4, 1911.

D. 4.28 P.M.

R. 7 P.M.

I spoke to the Minister for Foreign Affairs yesterday evening in the sense of your telegram No. 21⁽²⁾ on the subject of the Tehran-Khanikin line.

His Excellency said that he quite understood and shared your views as to the importance of Russian control, though strategically speaking the line would never be dangerous to Russia. His difficulty was that neither the Minister of Finance nor the public in general would contribute a penny towards its construction. I pointed out that, if constructed under German auspices before the completion of the North Persian Railway, Germany would become omnipotent at Tehran and a fatal blow would be struck at Russian influence. He would, moreover, sacrifice the chief concession he had won at Potsdam.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs replied that Russia could no more prevent the construction of this line than she had been able to oppose the Bagdad Railway. Had she vetoed it, Germany might have obtained far more important concessions, including the North Persia Railway itself, and by her consent to it she had secured Germany's renunciation of all such claims. He had just seen the French Ambassador, who had also spoken to him of internationalisation of the line. Till to-day, the idea of participation of French and British capital had never been suggested to him, and he cordially welcomed it as a possible way out of the difficulty.

On my expressing the hope that, were this idea adopted, Russia would not refuse to contribute her quota, His Excellency replied that he doubted whether Russia would contribute anything, nor was he sure that when the time came British capital would be forthcoming. I said the important thing was not to commit himself at present to handing over the railway either wholly or partially to Germany. He replied that he had not done so. I then enquired whether Germany was likely to accept a formula to the effect that Russia would engage to construct the Tehran-Khanikin line at a given date, while reserving to herself the right to invite participation of foreign capital. His Excellency said that he had been thinking of proposing some such formula to her, and proceeded to dilate on the conciliatory and straightforward spirit in which Germany was conducting the negotiations about the railway. I observed that there then could be no doubt as to her accepting it, as a refusal would mean that all she had told him hitherto was humbug.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe; and as having been seen by Lord Morley. It was sent to Paris on February 6; to Berlin on February 7; to Tehran (as No. 39). Lord Morley was in temporary charge of the Foreign Office in the absence of Sir Edward Grey.]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 642, No. 669.]

No. 674.

Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

4472/48/11/44.

(No. 65.) Secret.

Sir,

*Paris, D. February 5, 1911.**R. February 7, 1911.*

With reference to my telegram No. 6, secret of yesterday⁽²⁾ I have the honour to inform you that at the interview which I had with the Minister for Foreign

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King.]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 645, No. 672.]

Affairs with the view of carrying out the instructions contained in your Telegram No. 13 of the 2nd instant⁽³⁾ I allowed him to read Sir George Buchanan's despatch No. 25 secret of the 26th ultimo⁽⁴⁾ which I gave to His Excellency without the post-script to it. After M. Pichon had read it and told me that he had received from the French Ambassador at Petersburg information similar to that reported by Sir G. Buchanan, I gave to His Excellency the Memorandum of which I inclose a copy herein. After considering it he said that he concurred in your proposals and would send the requisite telegraphic instructions to M. Louis. I left the Memorandum with M. Pichon as an Aide-mémoire and in a private letter which I have received from him this morning returning to me the Memorandum, he stated that he has instructed M. Louis to concert with and act with Sir G. Buchanan in the sense desired by you in regard to M. Sazonow's negotiations with the German Government on the subject of the proposed railway from Khanikin to Teheran.

I have, &c.

FRANCIS BERTIE.

Enclosure in No. 674.

Memorandum.

Secret.

His Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg has learnt from M. Sazonow that the Russian Minister of Finance, whilst anxious to secure a 60% Russian participation in the Tehran-Khanikin line, refuses to take any financial responsibility for the eventual construction of that line. Failing such participation he will work for some such arrangement as the following:—If, when the line from Sadijeh had reached Khanikin, Russia had not commenced the construction of the Khanikin-Tehran line, she would come to an understanding with Germany for a joint construction of the latter railway. Germany had, so M. Sazonow informed Sir George Buchanan, declared her readiness to give an undertaking to build the line or to allow Russia to build the line with her or alone. If Germany were to build the line she would be willing that Russia should acquire the right to purchase the line on completion thereof; the price to be fixed by arbitration. Count de Pourtales had told M. Sazonow that Germany had bound herself to build *certain branch* railways under the Bagdad Railway Concession.⁽⁵⁾ M. Sazonow said that one of these railways was to run to Diarbekir and Karpuz from a junction on the Bagdad Railway, and that if the others, which he had not had time to examine, also ran parallel to the Russian frontier an exception might be made in their favour. In the case of railways running towards that frontier, however, such an exception could not be made.

Sir E. Grey has informed Sir G. Buchanan that he attaches the greatest importance to Russian construction and control of the Tehran-Khanikin line, expressing a strong hope that if M. Sazonow does not feel prepared to insist on this he will adopt the alternative proposal made by the Russian Minister of Finance referred to above viz:—If, when the line had reached Khanikin Russia had not commenced the construction of the Khanikin-Tehran line she should come to an understanding with Germany for a joint construction of that railway. Sir E. Grey pointed out further to Sir G. Buchanan that if the line were built entirely by Germany it might any day be at the disposal of Turkey for purposes of aggression. A suggestion had been made some time ago by the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs that England might participate in the construction of the Tehran-Khanikin line, and if M. Sazonow's difficulty were of a financial nature British capital would

⁽³⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 642, No. 668, *min.*, and note ⁽³⁾.]

⁽⁴⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 629–31, No. 659.]

⁽⁵⁾ [v. *B.F.S.P.*, Vol. 102, Articles I–III, pp. 833–5, and Article XII, pp. 837–8.]

probably be available, especially if for a certain time the option of construction were retained by Russia.

Germany need not be informed of this for she could not raise objections to a certain delay as some time would elapse before the commencement of the Sadijeh branch line. Sir E. Grey suggested as another alternative the internationalization of the line by admitting French capital as well, Germany receiving 30%, whilst Russia could reserve the rest, dividing this share with England and France. He considered that by both these proposals the financial difficulty could be turned, and he expressed the hope that M. Sazonow would take these alternatives into serious consideration as he attached far greater importance than M. Sazonow did to the danger from Turkey. He expressed surprise at the indifference shown by the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs on that point especially after the failure of the endeavours to secure the withdrawal of Turkey from the Urumia district and in view of the apprehension always expressed by M. Sazonow of Turkish railways in Asia Minor running in the direction of the Russian frontier.

His Majesty's Government attach great importance to the above proposal and they are strongly of opinion that if Russia relinquishes the option of making the Tehran-Khanikin line that line should be international to the extent proposed by Monsieur Pichon.

British Embassy, Paris.

February 4th, 1911.

No. 675.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

St. Petersburg, February 6, 1911.

4471/48/11/44.

D. 7.5 P.M.

Tel. (No. 29.) Secret.

R. 10 P.M.

My telegram No. 26.⁽²⁾

Minister for Foreign Affairs told me today that he hoped in about a week's time to submit to Council of Ministers and to the Emperor revised text of the draft agreement, and to communicate it when sanctioned to the German Ambassador as Russia's reply to the German Counter-proposals. He will also show it to me.

I urged him to be firm about the 2nd and 3rd articles. He said that the situation as regards Tehran-Khanikin line had greatly changed for the better since the proposed participation of British and French capital. He was in favour of some such formula as I had suggested to him, but feared that Germany might raise objections, and would insist on being given some share in the line. This, he believed, would not please the French. I said that I thought that they would not object to Germany being given 25 per cent. His Excellency replied that this would be fairest arrangement, but that the remaining 75 per cent. would eventually have to be taken up by France and England, as Russia could contribute nothing. I observed that Russia might be of a different mind in six years' time, and that proposed formula would give her an entirely free hand as regarded her future participation in the railway.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe. It was sent to Paris (as No. 15); to Tehran (as No. 41); to Berlin by bag.]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 646, No. 673.]

No. 676.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

5154/48/11/44.

(No. 33.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, D. February 6, 1911.**R. February 13, 1911.*

I took the opportunity of a conversation which I had with the Minister for Foreign Affairs this afternoon to speak to him in the terms of your despatch No. 31 of the 31st ultimo,⁽²⁾ on the subject of that portion of Persian territory that was left neutral by the Anglo-Russian agreement of 1907.⁽³⁾

His Excellency gave me the assurance that the Russian Government would not support the requests of third parties for concessions in that region nor consent to such requests being made without previous consultation with His Majesty's Government.

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been seen at Berlin.]⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 639, No. 665.]⁽³⁾ [For the text of this agreement v. *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IV, pp. 618-9, App. I.]

No. 677.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

4972/48/11/44.

(No. 38.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 6, 1911.

The Russian Ambassador asked Sir A. Nicolson to-day, on behalf of the Russian Minister for F[oreign] A[ffairs] in what form and to what amount British financial participation in the Tehran-Khanikin line would be afforded.

Sir A. Nicolson told H[is] E[xcellency] that he was naturally unable to give him any details. H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] had suggested as one alternative that, if Russia's difficulty was a financial one, means might be found to turn it by a participation of British capital. Details as to how that capital would be furnished would have to be reserved for consideration pending the receipt of data necessary to form an opinion.

Count Benckendorff asked whether the proposal as to participation could be regarded as emanating from H[is] M[ajesty's] Gov[ernment]. Sir A. Nicolson replied in the affirmative, and gave him the substance of my telegram No. 21 of the 2nd February⁽²⁾ to Y[our] E[xcellency].

Sir A. Nicolson added that, to his mind, the best course for M. Sazonow to pursue would be to adopt Y[our] E[xcellency's] suggestion: viz., to find a formula to the effect that Russia would engage to construct the Tehran-Khanikin line at a given date while reserving to herself the right to invite the participation of foreign capital.⁽³⁾

[I am, &c.]

E. GREY.]

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet Committee.]⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 642, No. 669. The telegram was dated February 1.]⁽³⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 646, No. 673.]

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir F. Cartwright.

Private.⁽¹⁾

My dear Cartwright,

Foreign Office, February 6, 1911.

. . . .⁽²⁾ I confess that I am completely bewildered and mystified by the actions and attitude of Sazonow. We daily receive news of fresh concessions which he is making to Germany, and he seems to be quite ready to yield with perfect complacency to the Germans railway construction in the Russian sphere in Persia. I may tell you that Isvolsky delayed entering into conversations with Germany on the subject, as he held it to be absolutely essential that Russia should prevent her from obtaining any footing in Northern Persia. His difficulty was to find some *quid pro quo* which would satisfy Germany, and which would enable him to get from her definite engagements that she would abstain from endeavouring to obtain any concessions in the Russian sphere. Being unable to provide a *quid pro quo* which he thought would be satisfactory to Germany, he hesitated to continue the conversation with Berlin which had begun in 1907.⁽³⁾ Sazonow now appears to have lightheartedly surrendered to Germany all that Isvolsky was determined to withhold from her, and, so far as we are aware, he seems to have made this surrender without receiving anything at all in exchange for it. I cannot understand how he can be so completely blind to the consequences of what he is doing, and he appears to have been absolutely hypnotized by Kiderlen. Our position is rendered somewhat embarrassing, as there is no doubt that, if Germany obtains all that Sazonow is willing to concede to her, she will achieve a very strong position at Tehran, and will also be exceedingly difficult to deal with whenever we commence our negotiations with her in regard to the Southern section. We have suggested to Sazonow among other alternatives that, if Russia is unwilling or unable to furnish the funds necessary for the construction of the Tehran-Kanakin line, he should apply to Paris and London as well as to Berlin for the necessary capital. This would be to a certain extent internationalizing the line, a solution which to my mind is by no means a satisfactory one; but it is perhaps the best which we can devise in the situation which Sazonow has kindly created for us. We are at this moment discussing with the India Office what lines it is to our interest to obtain from the Persian Government in the South of Persia. The capital of these lines and the construction would be entirely British, but, in the improbable event of our being unable to obtain in this country sufficient funds, we should, so far as the neutral zone is concerned, perhaps be ready to admit a limited internationalisation, such as we have proposed to Sazonow for railways in the North. As regards our own sphere, we should certainly maintain that any lines which might be constructed there should be entirely British. It is, however, possible that, during the negotiations which we may eventually open with Germany as regards the Bagdad Railway, we may find it desirable to give her certain *quid pro quos* for any concessions which we may obtain from her in regard to the Southern section. In that case we may be disposed to grant to her a certain percentage in the supplying of material for railways in our sphere, but the construction and control of those railways would certainly remain in our own hands.

I am a little afraid that Sazonow has tied his hands far more tightly than we imagined during his Potsdam visit, and what perturbs me is the apparent unconcern with which he allows himself to yield to any demands which Germany may make of him. It is curious that he should have stated to Buchanan that he highly appreciated the conciliatory and straightforward spirit in which Germany was conducting the negotiations. The conciliatory spirit appears to me to be entirely on his own side and, as for straightforwardness, it is odd that he should appreciate

⁽¹⁾ [Carnock MSS., Vol. I of 1911]

⁽²⁾ [The first paragraph of this letter deals with private matters.]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. G.P., XXV (I), pp. 103-173, Chapter 185, passim. cp. also Gooch & Temperley, Vol. IV, pp. 475-90, Nos. 428-40, passim; pp. 604-5, No. 544.*]

it so highly when Germany, both officially and semi-officially, has denounced as apocryphal and as a forgery the draft agreement which was published in the "Evening Times,"⁽⁴⁾ and which was, in fact, textually correct.

I am afraid there is exceedingly little probability of our being able to persuade Sazonow to accelerate his visits to Paris and London. He would hesitate to make these journeys until he has definitely settled matters with Berlin, as he would fear to arouse German suspicion. Such visits would, no doubt, be of great advantage, and would remove much of the apprehension which at present exists; but I have little hope that we shall be able to induce him to come here until May. . . .⁽⁵⁾

[A. NICOLSON].

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 601-3, No. 638]

⁽⁵⁾ [The rest of the letter refers to Turkey, the Balkan States and other matters not relevant to this chapter]

No. 679.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

4364/48/11/44.

Tel. (No. 34.)

Foreign Office, February 7, 1911.

Your telegram No. 26.⁽²⁾ Your language approved.

The formula which you suggest would meet present difficulty very well, and you could inform Minister for Foreign Affairs that I trust that he will take it into serious consideration. If Russian Government are unwilling to take over whole financing and construction of Tehran-Khanikin line we should be ready to consider whether it would be possible for the necessary British capital to be forthcoming for the purpose. Failing this the second alternative proposed in my telegram No. 21⁽³⁾ could be entertained. But the acceptance of the formula suggested by you would be the best solution, as it would afford time to study in detail the mode and amount of participation of British capital, either wholly or in conjunction with others. We have no data whatever as to probable cost of construction of the line, and this and other data are naturally necessary.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Paris (No. 16); to Tehran (No. 42).]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 646, No. 673.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 642, No. 669]

No. 680.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

4782/48/11/44.

Tel. (No. 30.) Secret.

St. Petersburg, February 8, 1911.

D. 8.1 P.M.

R. 10 P.M.

Your telegram No. 26.⁽²⁾ (Repeating to Paris 13.)

The telegrams which the Minister for Foreign Affairs has received this morning from the Russian Ambassadors at London and Paris have produced a very salutary effect.⁽³⁾ He has completely changed his tone. He told me on Monday that participa-

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe. It was sent to Berlin (as No. 11); to Tehran (as No. 47); to Constantinople (as No. 27). Copies were sent to the Committee of Imperial Defence; to the Director of Military Operations; to the India Office.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 642, No. 668, *min.*, and *note* ⁽³⁾.]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. Siebert*, pp. 548-9.]

tion of German capital would not please the French. To-day he inveighed against the French, who, after accusing him of having made recent political arrangement with Germany, had nevertheless put forward an internationalisation scheme for the Tehran-Khanikin line which would involve participation on the part of Germany. This he desired to avoid. He had, he said, thought over the suggested formula, but as it would arouse German suspicions as to the sources whence he proposed to get the capital he had preferred another, viz., "Russia engages to obtain for herself the concession for the line, and to proceed with its construction." He was only able to take this engagement now that he was assured of the participation of French and British capital, and this wording would leave Russia free to form whatever *consortium* she judged best when the time came. He did not wish to press at present for a definite assurance as to the exact amount of British capital, as this was a matter which could wait.

I told His Excellency that so far as I could judge this formula would meet our views in every respect, as it would still enable Russia to construct and finance the line herself if she wished, which was always what we had urged.

I asked whether he could give me the revised text of the draft agreement to send by bag to-morrow. He said this was impossible, as it would not be ready to submit to the Council of Ministers till Saturday. On my pressing him as to alterations to be introduced into the original text, he told me that the words "without previous agreement with the Russian Government" would be inserted in article 3, and that, instead of that article appearing in the agreement, the engagement taken by Germany would be recorded by an exchange of notes, of which copies would be communicated to England and France.

As Germany considered it was beneath the dignity of a Great Power to publicly declare that she had no political interests in Persia, Article 4 would commence "German Government recognise the special political interests of Russia, &c." His Excellency thought that such a declaration was all that could be expected of her. At the end of the first paragraph of that article the words "as well as other concessions of a territorial character" would be suppressed. His Excellency explained that this was being done as Germany objected to have her subjects excluded from mining or forest concessions.

His Excellency changes front so often that I cannot guarantee whether the final text will exactly correspond with what he told me. I confined myself to saying that I hoped that when he communicated his proposals to the German Ambassador he would give him to understand that negotiations could not be indefinitely prolonged. Minister for Foreign Affairs replied that he intended to say that, while ready to consider any verbal alterations, he could not consent to any further modification of the tenour of the agreement.

MINUTE.

M. Sazonow's criticism of the French Gov[ernmen]t is incomprehensible. They do not want the internationalization of the line but suggested it as an alternative to M. Sazonow's inclination to hand over the whole railway to Germany.

L. M.
A. N.
M.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir A. Nicolson.⁽¹⁾

Private.⁽²⁾

My dear Nicolson,

St. Petersburg, February 8, 1911.

Many thanks for your last letter.⁽³⁾

I have now resumed in one despatch my various conversations with Sazonow during the past fortnight, and as they nearly all had to do with the second and third articles of the Draft Agreement, there is, I fear, a good deal of repetition of what I have already written. I am, however, obliged to be always at him to prevent his making further concessions to the Germans. When I last wrote to you his idea was that Russia should participate to the extent of 60% in the Khanikin-Teheran line, but Kokovtsoff came to him and said that as he did not want him to "faire fausse route" he would tell him at once that he would not accept any financial responsibility as regarded the building of the railway. The prospect of obtaining the money from private Russian sources seemed equally hopeless, so he was really at his wits' end how to get over the difficulty. He was, therefore, immensely relieved when Louis and I spoke to him about the participation of British and French capital in the enterprise. I only mentioned the idea to him after making a last effort to induce him to keep the construction and control of the railway in Russia's hands, but as he declared that the financial difficulty rendered any such an arrangement impossible I suggested it as an alternative. I urged him in any case not to commit himself to any promise to hand over the railway to Germany, pointing out that six years must elapse before it could be commenced; that this would give him ample time to try and arrange some financial combination; and that Russian public opinion might then take a very different view of the matter to what it did at present. I therefore suggested that he should find a formula under which Russia would engage to commence the construction at a certain date, while reserving to herself the right to invite the participation of foreign capital. Such an arrangement would still leave her free to construct the railway herself, if she wished to when the time came, while if she adhered to her present frame of mind the participation of French and British capital would prevent it becoming an entirely German undertaking. Sazonow, when I last saw him on Monday, gave me to understand that he would draft a formula in the above sense. He said, however, that the Germans might object to it unless they were admitted on an equal footing with us and France, while he believed that the French wished to keep them out altogether. I told him that I did not believe this to be the case, and as in a recent conversation Louis had said that he thought we ought to restrict their share to 25%, I suggested that that amount should be allotted to Germany, while the remaining 75% should be shared between the other three Powers. After what Louis had said I thought it was better to propose that each of the four Powers should have 25%, instead of giving Germany 30% as Sir Edward had suggested in his telegram No. 21.⁽⁴⁾ Sazonow agreed, but added that France and England would have to take up Russia's share between them.

February 9. I had got so far yesterday, when I received Sir Edward's telegram on the subject of the formula which I had suggested.⁽⁵⁾ I saw Sazonow in the afternoon and found him somewhat agitated by the telegrams which he had received from London and Paris. He read me Benckendorff's report of his conversation

⁽¹⁾ [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe. The endorsement is initialled by Sir Edward Grey.]

⁽²⁾ [Carnock MSS., Vol. I of 1911.]

⁽³⁾ [The reference is to Sir A. Nicolson's letter of January 30, 1911. It refers to the Russo-German negotiations, but adds nothing of importance to information given elsewhere. Carnock MSS., Vol. I of 1911.]

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 642, No. 669.]

⁽⁵⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 651, No. 679.]

with you, which seemed to have made an impression on him, and then proceeded to abuse the French. They were, he said, quite impossible. They had lost their heads completely, and were saying that he was negotiating a secret arrangement with Germany behind their backs. And yet it was they who, by this internationalisation scheme, were bringing the Germans into this railway business—the one thing which he wished to avoid. I could hardly believe my ears, as he went on to say that the formula which I had suggested would not do, as it would leave the door open to German participation. He had apparently forgotten all that he had said to me and Louis at the time when he was seriously thinking of handing over the whole railway to Germany, and I did not remind him of it as I was only too pleased at his new departure. I was rather surprised at his now abusing the French for having originated the idea of internationalisation, when only the other day he seemed disposed to blame them for wishing to keep the Germans out. Such inconsistencies do not trouble him in the least, and he got out of the difficulty by denying that he had ever said anything of the kind—although he most certainly did so. The great thing, however, is that he is now adopting a formula which meets our views much better than the one which I had suggested. We evidently owe this change for the better to what you said to Benckendorff and to something that Pichon must have said to Iswolsky. I do not know whether Iswolsky carried out Pichon's idea of telegraphing direct to the Emperor or not; but Sazonow saw His Majesty on Tuesday, and he certainly yesterday gave me the impression of having received a "savon" from somebody.

I have telegraphed fully all that he told me about the modifications which are to be introduced into the Draft Agreement. I do not think that it was any use again attacking him on the subject of Article 1, nor did I make any observations on the fresh concessions which he is making to the Germans in Articles III and IV. The negotiations would, I think, have broken down had he insisted on leaving Article III as it stands in the Draft Agreement, and the exchange of notes gets over the difficulty. The proposed change in Article IV considerably weakens the force of what he has always held up to me as one of the chief results of the Potsdam meeting; but there is something to be said for the German view that it is rather derogatory to the dignity of a Great Power to declare in a diplomatic Act that she has no political interests in Persia. The omission of the words "territorial concessions" is not of any great importance.

We may, I think, be well satisfied if the Agreement is concluded on the present lines; but I shall not feel quite easy about it until I see the actual text.⁽⁶⁾ Sazonow makes such extraordinary changes of front that one cannot tell what may happen from day to day. I thought it well to impress on him the necessity of telling Pourtales that the negotiations cannot be allowed to drag on owing to any fresh demands which the Germans may put forward, and he says that he intends to say that verbal amendments will be taken into consideration by him, but no changes in the tenour of the Agreement.

I must say that, with the one exception of the withdrawal of Russia's opposition to the Bagdad Railway, Sazonow has behaved very well in keeping us informed of the course of the negotiations with Germany. I do not think that he has kept anything back from me. If he has we shall find it out in a few days, when he shows me the revised text; but so far as I can see at present, he has been very open and straightforward, in spite of his occasional backslidings. The confidence which he has thus placed in us will, I fear, render our own position rather difficult when we begin our conversations with Germany. He told me the other day that Kühlmann of the German Embassy was carrying on a regular campaign in the English Radical press in favour of an Anglo-German Entente, and as he would not do so without orders from Berlin, he supposed that the *pourparlers* between the two Governments would soon commence. He said that it would be a very good

(6) [For the revised text, *v. infra*, pp. 719–20, No. 741, *encl.*]

thing if we could come to an agreement about armaments, though he was evidently very sceptical as to the result. In the course of our conversation he further remarked that Germany's policy was always to sow suspicion between us, and though he spoke as if he quite approved of the idea of our talking to the Germans, he none the less rather gave me the impression of wanting to know what we were going to talk about. I think that when we know the final results of the negotiations with Pourtalès, I might be instructed to thank him for the confidence which he has placed in us in keeping me *au courant* of what has been going on. I might also repeat to him what I told him last month about our relations with Germany, though if Sir Edward would allow me I should like to be able to say that we would inform him from time to time in the strictest confidence of the progress of our negotiations.

Louis has gone to Paris and the French Minister, Panafeu, has just been to see me. He tells me that he saw Sazonow yesterday, and was almost dumbfounded at his change of tone. Sazonow said that his language had been entirely misrepresented (by Louis and I presume by me) and that he had never said a word to Pourtalès about giving Germany a predominant share in the Teheran-Khanikin line. He even made the astounding statement that he had had no conversations with Pourtalès on the Draft Agreement, and that apparently all that has passed between them was that Pourtalès had handed him Germany's counter-proposals to the Draft Agreement. His memory is certainly a very convenient one when he wants to unsay what he has said.

O'Beirne has just brought me a very satisfactory piece of intelligence. Sazonow, whom he met at dinner last night, told him that he had completely remodelled the text of Article I and that he was very pleased with the new wording which, he thought, would completely meet our views. He also spoke to O'Beirne about our future conversations with Germany, and betrayed considerable uneasiness as to what might form their subject-matter.

We are very happy here and like the Russians very much. The late hours, however, are rather tiring. Last night there was a Ball at the German Embassy, followed by a Roller Skating Rink party got up by the Grand Duchess Cyril which lasted till three. Tonight there is a Ball at the Grand Duchess Xenia's, at which we shall have to remain to the bitter end.

Ever yours,
GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

MINUTE.

Of course Germany must participate in Teheran-Khanikin R[ailwa]y, if we and the French do so.

E. G.

No. 682.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

5158/48/11/44.

(No. 37.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, D. February 9, 1911.

R. February 13, 1911.

The Russo-German negotiations have made but little progress during the past fortnight. In the conversation reported in my telegram No. 22, Secret, of the 30th ultimo⁽²⁾ Monsieur Sazonow informed me that the question of the Teheran-Khanikin Railway was still under discussion and that it was complicated by the fact that the Minister of Finance had declined to assume any financial responsibility

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King; and as having been seen at Berlin.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 637, No. 664.]

for the construction of the line. He had himself been trying to conclude an arrangement under which Russia would participate to the extent of 60% in the undertaking in order to secure the predominant control; but, while he would have no difficulty in inducing Germany to assent to this, he did not know how to secure the necessary capital. Germany, he must admit, had approached the question in the most conciliatory spirit and was willing to accept any arrangement agreeable to Russia. All that she wanted was an engagement that the Railway would be commenced when once the Sadijeh line had reached Khanikin. She was ready to leave the construction, either in whole or in part to Russia or else to undertake to build the whole line herself. In the latter case she would give Russia the option of purchasing the railway, when constructed, at a price to be settled by arbitration.

On my asking His Excellency whether it was true that the line would cost a hundred million roubles and whether he thought that it would be easy for Germany to find even 40% of the required capital, Monsieur Sazonow replied that the figure which I had quoted was exaggerated but that at present it was impossible to estimate either the cost of its construction or the approximate amount of the receipts which it would eventually yield. Count Pourtalès had assured him that, as the main railway would reach Bagdad in four or five years, the branch line from Sadijeh to Khanikin would be completed in six years at the latest and that it would then be quite easy for Germany to find the capital necessary for continuing that line to Teheran. He did not know whether Count Pourtalès was trying to bluff him but it was possible that Germany contemplated postponing, or even abandoning altogether the continuation of the Bagdad Railway to the Gulf and diverting any capital which she might have set aside for the Gulf section to the construction of the Khanikin-Teheran line.

With regard to the railways referred to in Article 3 of the Draft Agreement, Monsieur Sazonow said that the German Ambassador had told him that, under the Bagdad Railway Concession, Germany had undertaken to construct certain branch lines. One of these was to run from a point on the main line to Diarbekir and Kharpout and, if the others were also to run parallel to the Russian frontier, he might make an exception in their favour. When I saw His Excellency again a few days later I pointed out that the Diarbekir-Kharpout line was the only one which the Germans were under an obligation to build and that, as regarded the other lines mentioned in Article 12 of the Concession, it was merely a question of option. Monsieur Sazonow replied that he was aware of this but that the Germans wanted to exercise this option in the case of two lines, namely, one from Mosul to Arbil and the other from a point on the Diala to a place which neither he nor the German Ambassador had been able to find on the map. As both these lines were at a considerable distance from the Russian frontier and as the first of them had its terminus at the foot of a lofty Mountain range he did not see how he could object to them. I contented myself at the time by remarking that they seemed to me to bring the Turks within dangerous proximity of the Persian frontier, but in a subsequent conversation, I called his attention to the fact that the Mosul-Arbil railway would give the Turks direct access to the Urumia district if, as was always possible, they were able to carry on the line through some pass in the mountains. Monsieur Sazonow admitted that there might be some truth in this but said that the line from the Diala was, he believed, only intended to tap some naphtha springs not very far from Khanikin. He had, he informed me, written to Count Pourtalès saying that, while he personally saw no objection to the Diarbekir-Kharpout line, the whole question of these railways would have to be carefully examined by the Military Authorities and that, as in the case of the other two lines Germany had only the option and not the obligation to build them he thought that it ought not to be difficult to come to some agreement with respect to them.

I saw His Excellency again on the 3rd instant and communicated to him the substance of your telegram No. 21 of the 1st instant,⁽³⁾ laying especial stress on

(3) [*v. supra*, p. 642, No. 669; *cp.* p. 646, No. 673.]

the importance which you attached to the Teheran-Khanikin railway being constructed and controlled by Russia. Monsieur Sazonow replied that he quite understood and shared your views on this question though he did not himself see how this line could, in any circumstances, be a danger to Russia from a strategic point of view. He had all along been endeavouring to retain the control of this railway in Russia's hands, but, as neither the Minister of Finance nor the Russian public would contribute a penny towards its construction the position which he had taken up was becoming almost untenable. His countrymen, unfortunately, were so spoilt by protectionism that they resented anything that would tend to introduce foreign competition into markets which they regarded as specially reserved to themselves. It was impossible for him to go round to every journalist and to every financial magnate and explain to them that the railway would be built whether they liked it or not and that it was to their interest to build it so as to prevent its falling entirely into German hands.⁽⁴⁾

The French Ambassador, His Excellency then proceeded to say, had just been to see him and had also spoken about the internationalisation of the line. The idea that British and French capital might participate in the enterprise was a new but welcome suggestion and might, he thought, offer a way of escape out of his present difficulties. On my enquiring whether, in the event of this idea being adopted, Russia would contribute her quota, His Excellency replied that it would be impossible to raise any money in Russia towards such an undertaking and he very much doubted whether, when the time came, any British capital would be forthcoming. He would, however, do all in his power to attain a solution of the question in the sense suggested. I remarked that the important thing at the present moment was that Russia should not commit herself by any promise to cede the railway either as a whole or in part to Germany. While I quite understood the financial difficulty with which he was confronted I would ask him to reflect on the fatal blow that would be struck at Russia's influence and prestige in Persia were Germany to build and control this line before the North Persian Railway had been completed. Nor could I, in such a case, see what Russia would have gained from the Agreement with Germany. Monsieur Sazonow replied that he had not committed his Government in any way at present but that Russia could no more prevent the eventual construction of the Teheran-Khanikin line than she had been able to oppose the Bagdad Railway scheme. She had been obliged to consent to the construction of this line in order to purchase Germany's renunciation of other and more important claims in North Persia which might one day have included the concession for the North Persian Railway itself.

Reverting once more to the question of internationalisation I enquired whether His Excellency thought that Germany would accept a formula to the effect that when the Sadijeh line reaches Khanikin "*la Russie procédera à la construction de la ligne Khanikin-Téhéran, en se réservant le droit d'inviter la participation de capitaux étrangers.*" Monsieur Sazonow replied that he had himself been considering whether some such formula might not get over the difficulty and, after recapitulating what he has so often told me of the conciliatory and straightforward manner in which Germany has throughout treated the question of this railway, remarked that he did not see what objections she could raise. I observed that if she did raise objections His Excellency need not listen to them as they would prove that all that Count Pourtales had told him hitherto was humbug and that Germany wanted the Railway for other than trade purposes.

On my calling on His Excellency on the 6th instant⁽⁵⁾ Monsieur Sazonow of his own accord reverted to the subject remarking that the situation had changed greatly for the better now that there was a question of the participation of French and British capital. I then asked whether he had come to any decision about the

⁽⁴⁾ [Marginal note by Mr. Mallet: "It will be strange if M. Sazonow's remedy for this—namely voluntary surrender to Germany—will be more palatable! L. M."]

⁽⁵⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 648-9, Nos. 675-6.]

formula and His Excellency replied that he was quite in favour of the one which I had suggested but that he feared that Germany would raise objections unless she was also admitted on an equal footing with England and France; and he believed that the French Government wished to exclude her altogether. As in a conversation which I had with my French colleague a few days ago Monsieur Louis had suggested that Germany's share should be restricted to 25%, I said that I did not think that this was the case and that, if 25% were allotted to Germany the remaining 75% might be divided between the other three Powers. His Excellency agreed but added that France and England would have to divide Russia's share between them. I remarked that it was to Russia's interest to leave the door open so that she could do what she liked when the time came. The Sadijeh-Khanikin line could not under the most favourable circumstances be completed for another six years and many things might happen in that time. Russian public opinion might then take an entirely different view of the matter and favour the idea of the line being wholly or mainly constructed with Russian capital.

In the course of our conversation His Excellency told me that he hoped about the end of the week to lay before the Council of Ministers the revised text of the Draft Agreement and that, after it had been sanctioned by the Emperor he would communicate it to Count Pourtalès as Russia's reply to the proposals and amendments which the German Government had submitted with respect to the original draft. He would also naturally show it to me. The question on which it would be the most difficult to arrive at an agreement was that relative to the text of Article 8, which deals with railways to the North of Khanikin. This matter was, he considered, such an important one for Russia that he would be obliged to make a firm stand with regard to it. I encouraged him in this idea as I think that a Turco-German railway line from Mosul to Arbil would be fraught with danger to Anglo-Russian interests in Persia.

I saw Monsieur Sazonow again yesterday afternoon and communicated to him the substance of your telegram No. 34 of the 7th instant⁽⁶⁾ on the subject of the Teheran-Khanikin line. His Excellency replied by reading to me two telegrams which he had received from Count Benckendorff reporting a conversation which he had had on the same subject with Sir Arthur Nicolson.⁽⁷⁾ He then proceeded to say, with considerable warmth, that the French had quite lost their heads and were accusing him of negotiating a secret political understanding with Germany behind their backs. In spite of this, however, it was they who had originated the proposal for the internationalisation of the line with the participation of German capital. I asked him why it was that he had told me the other day that the French wanted to keep the Germans altogether out of the undertaking; but His Excellency denied ever having said so. He had, he continued, thought over the formula which I had suggested but he was afraid that it would necessarily involve German participation and this he desired to avoid.⁽⁸⁾ He had therefore prepared another: "*La Russie s'engage à obtenir pour elle-même la concession et à procéder à la construction de la ligne.*" This wording would not, as the other would have done, arouse German suspicions as to the sources whence he proposed to obtain the necessary capital and would leave Russia free to form whatever consortium she pleased when the time came. The question as to the exact amount of capital which Great Britain would eventually contribute need not be discussed at present and he did not wish to press for any definite assurance on this point. It was only now that he had been assured of the participation of British and French capital that he was able to act as he was doing.

From His Excellency's language one would imagine that he had never entertained the idea of ceding the railway in whole or in part to Germany and I think that his changed attitude is probably due to the language which Sir Arthur Nicolson

⁽⁶⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 651, No. 679.]

⁽⁷⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 649, No. 677. cp. Siebert, pp 548-9.]

⁽⁸⁾ [Unsigned marginal note by Mr. Mallet: "Compare above! [L. M.]"']

and Monsieur Pichon have held to the Russian Ambassadors in London and Paris. I told Monsieur Sazonow that, so far as I could judge, nothing could be better than the proposed formula: that it appeared to meet our wishes in every respect and that it had the advantage of still enabling Russia to construct and finance the railway by herself if she should wish to do so.

I then asked His Excellency whether he could give me the revised text of the draft agreement to forward to you by to-day's messenger; but he replied that this was impossible as it would only be submitted to the Council of Ministers on Saturday. It had, he said, been very difficult to redraft as it was necessary to change the wording completely so that it might not in any way resemble the version published by the "Evening Times."⁽⁹⁾ After some pressing, however, Monsieur Sazonow informed me that the following were the principal alterations introduced into the original text:—

Article 3 will disappear from the agreement and the engagements taken by Germany with regard to railways to the North of Khanikin will be recorded in an exchange of Notes of which copies will be communicated to England and France. These engagements will, however, be modified by the addition of the words "*sans un accord préalable avec la Russie.*" Otherwise I gather no alteration will be made in the text.

Article 4 will commence thus: "*Le Gouvernement allemand reconnaît les intérêts spéciaux de la Russie en Perse,*" instead of "*Le Gouvernement allemand reconnaît n'avoir en Perse aucun intérêt d'ordre politique.*" Germany, His Excellency stated, considered that it was beneath her dignity as a Great Power to declare publicly that she had no political interests in Persia and, though the German Chancellor had, as His Excellency had reminded Count Pourtalès, made such a declaration at Potsdam, he thought that the assurance which the German Government was now giving, equally answered the purpose. The words "*ainsi que d'autres concessions de caractère territorial*" in the last line of the first paragraph of the same article will be omitted, as Germany objects to her subjects being precluded from seeking mining or forest concessions.

I refrained from offering any observations on these new concessions which Monsieur Sazonow is making as I do not see how we can take exception to them. I expressed the hope, however, that His Excellency would give Count Pourtalès clearly to understand that he would not allow the negotiations to be indefinitely prolonged by further demands on Germany's part: and Monsieur Sazonow informed me that he proposed saying that while ready to consider any verbal amendments he will not consent to any more alteration touching the tenour of the agreement.

I would only add that Monsieur Sazonow changes front so rapidly from day to day, that I cannot guarantee that the final form of the agreement will exactly correspond with what he told me yesterday afternoon.

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

MINUTES.

This is an interesting and useful despatch but as all the points in it have been embodied in telegrams and dealt with already it seems unnecessary to comment on it at length.

We might however approve Sir G. Buchanan's language in the various conversations recorded.⁽¹⁰⁾

H. N.

Feb[ruary] 13, 1911.

R. P. M.

⁽⁹⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 601-3, No. 638.]

⁽¹⁰⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's despatch (No. 49) of February 20 to Sir G. Buchanan records "warm and entire approval" of language held in this and other despatches. (F.O. 371/1237. 5158/48/11/44.)]

Nothing could have been better than Sir G. Buchanan's language throughout these conversations. He should be warmly approved.

L. M.

I quite agree with Mr. Mallet

A. N.
E. G.

No. 683.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

St. Petersburg, February 10, 1911.

4975/48/11/44.

D. 2.10 P.M.

Tel. (No. 32.)

R. 2.45 P.M.

Secret. My tel[egram] No. 30.⁽²⁾

M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] told me last night that in remodelling draft agreement he has inverted the order of things. Reference will first of all be made to Konieh-Bagdad section and later on in the text it will be stated "that Russia engages not to oppose above mentioned railway." He hoped that this would meet our wishes though he could not guarantee its acceptance by Germany.

With respect to Art[icle] III he will only have recourse to exchange of notes if he fails to secure Germany's acceptance of the text which he is submitting.

He will not be able to show me the revised text before Wednesday.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram is endorsed as having been sent to the King. It was sent to Paris (as No. 21); to Berlin (as No. 12); to Constantinople (as No. 30); to Tehran (as No. 50).]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 651-2, No. 680.]

No. 684.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

St. Petersburg, February 11, 1911.

5122/48/11/44.

D. 9.42 A.M.

Tel. (No. 33.) Secret.

R. 2 P.M.

M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] sent for me yesterday evening and said that he was much perturbed by apprehensions expressed in London with regard to Tehran-Khanikin railway. He recapitulated what he had told us before and after Potsdam as to the necessity of securing it for Russia adding that he had imagined we had understood it was a vital interest for her. I replied that we quite understood Russia's position but were afraid control might pass into German hands. He protested that he had always intended to retain control and reproached French Ambassador with misleading his Gov[ernment] by stating he had broached the subject of cession to the German Ambassador. I said I had never reported in the above sense to H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] but that I had felt it my duty to call their attention to the fact that such a cession was an eventuality with which

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram is endorsed as having been sent to the King. It was sent to Paris (as No. 36); to Berlin (as No. 13); to Tehran (as No. 51); to Constantinople (as No. 34). A copy was sent to the India Office.]

we might one day be confronted. I reminded him of the language which he had repeatedly held to me on the subject and how he had once told me it would really be better that Germany should bear cost of its construction. He replied that this view had been expressed by the Minister of Commerce in Council of Ministers but that he had always advocated Russian control.

I remarked that any apprehensions which might have existed would now have been set at rest by my tel[egram] No. 30.⁽²⁾ He then read me a tel[egram] from Russian Ambassador in London reporting a conversation with Mr. Tyrrell on the subject of British participation in which latter had said that if Germany accepted proposed combination we should have no difficulty in finding our share of capital.⁽³⁾ He hoped we had not mentioned this matter to Germany as if she got wind of it she would not accept his new formula unless she were also allotted a share. He wanted to make the railway a purely Russian affair and to leave his Gov[ernmen]t free to make whatever financial arrangements they liked. I told him what I had said in my above-mentioned tel[egram] on this point and he said that I had accurately expressed his views. He begged me however to impress on you necessity of not mentioning the idea of future British participation either in financial or diplomatic circles.

He then said that, though revised draft agreement had not yet been submitted to Council of Ministers, he would let me read it in the strictest confidence but that he could not give me a copy.

Preamble records the principle of commercial equality and recognises Russia's special political interests while those of Germany are described as being of a purely commercial character.

Article 1 is a revised reproduction of Article 4 of original draft with omission of all references to territorial concessions.

Under Article 2 Russia engages to obtain concessions for a linking-up line from the Sadijeh-Khanikin line, without Tehran being specified as the junction, when "that branch of Konieh-Bagdad Railway shall have been completed."

Article 3 states that Russia will put no obstacles in way of the above-mentioned railway though she cannot be required to make any financial sacrifices. Article concludes with a revised version of former Article 3 respecting railways to the north of Khanikin, Germany engaging not to lend her material or diplomatic support to any such enterprises.

Russian M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] seems to have done his best to meet our wishes and it might be well to express appreciation and tranquillise his present agitated frame of mind. I fear revised text will not be well received by Germany.

MINUTES.

M. Sazonow's language about the control of the Khanikin-Tehran line is much more satisfactory than it was for, whatever he may say now, his earlier attitude gave good reason to fear that he contemplated ceding it to the Germans.

The new draft agreement is also far better and contains little of which we can complain. He did well, also, to show it to Sir G. Buchanan before submitting it to the German Gov[ernmen]t.

We might telegraph to Sir G. Buchanan⁽⁴⁾ instructing him to express to M. Sazonow our appreciation of his attitude and of the fact that he has shown us the text of the new draft, which we consider far more satisfactory, and also to reassure him as to our discretion about the Khanikin-Tehran line, his ideas as to the financial side of which will be mentioned neither to the Germans nor in any financial or diplomatic circles.

(I assume that the expression "Konieh-Bagdad Railway" is explicit enough as excluding the Bagdad-Gulf section.)

H. N.
Feb[ruary] 11, 1911.
R. P. M

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 651-2, No. 680.]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. Siebert-Benckendorff*, II, pp. 26-7.]

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. immediately succeeding document.*]

It was we who suggested in F[oreign] O[ffice] Tel[egram] No. 21 secret⁽⁵⁾ that the question of international participation need not be mentioned to Germany

L. M.
A. N.

The Germans may perhaps be trusted to "mention" it, on their own account? [E. G.] Germany was to have had 30%-40% under the arrangement. Russia's 60%-70% was to have been international i.e. divided between France and England. I should have added the words "in the Russian share" after participation

L. M.

Seen by Lord Morley.

E. G.
15.2.11.

(5) [r *supra*, p. 612, No. 669]

No. 685.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.

F.O. 371/1237.

5122/48/11/44.

Tel. (No. 41.)

Foreign Office, February 11, 1911, 4.40 P.M.

Secret. Your tel[egram] No. 33.⁽¹⁾

Express to M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] my satisfaction and thanks for his friendly communication which I highly appreciate. He may rely on our discretion. Nothing has been said by us to Germany.

(1) [v. immediately preceding document]

No. 686.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

5394/48/11/44.

Tel. (No. 36.) Secret.

St. Petersburg, February 13, 1911.

D. 8.50 P.M.

R. 10.15 P.M.

Your telegram No. 41.⁽²⁾

I conveyed your messages to the Minister for Foreign Affairs to-day. His Excellency expressed himself as much pleased, but said that fresh difficulty had arisen. Council of Ministers, to whom he had submitted revised agreement, held that public opinion in Russia would raise an outcry were the Government to engage to construct railway (? facilitating) access of German goods to Persia before building any railway in the north to promote Russia's economic interests. Duma, however, would never sanction Government guarantee for railways in Persia while they were so much needed in interior of Russia. He must therefore look to London and Paris for financial support. It would be sufficient were a line to be built from Enzeli

(1) [This telegram is endorsed as having been sent to the King. It was sent to Paris (as No 33).]

(2) [v. immediately preceding document.]

to Tehran, and he hoped that French and English financiers who were ready to contribute to Tehran-Khanikin line would also interest themselves in this railway. The two lines must, however, be treated separately, as until the agreement was published secrecy must be observed with regard to the latter, while it was not necessary in the case of the former.

I suggested that (group undecypherable: ?pending the) publication of the agreement he should announce intention of Russian Government to obtain concession for the northern line, but he said that he could not do this without being sure of finding the money.

I asked whether an assurance from His Majesty's Government that they would do their best to interest British capitalists in the undertaking would suffice, but he wanted something more than this.

(Confidential.)

He considers northern line a better investment than the southern and that it might be regarded as the first section of the trans-Persian railway. He cannot hand revised agreement to German Ambassador in its present form till he receives some assurances from London and Paris.

MINUTES.

This telegram raises questions of some difficulty.

Recently M. Sazonow informed Sir G. Buchanan that the importance of Russian commerce in northern Persia had been greatly exaggerated: now however he finds that public opinion in Russia is likely to make a great outcry on behalf of that very commerce.

As an issue from the difficulty indicated in this telegram, H[is] E[xcellency] suggests building the Enzeli-Tehran line before any others in Persia; he urges that it would be a better investment than a southern line; and, Russian financial support not being forthcoming, he seeks an assurance that the want will be supplied by British capital.

It will be recalled that in 1908 M. Isvolsky urged, with reference to a line from Julfa to Mohammerah, that suitable conditions of Anglo-Russian cooperation in the project would be that the northern section should be built first, and the rates differentiated so that Russian goods should have an advantage over goods coming from the Persian Gulf. For obvious reasons we combated this view (see memorandum handed to M. Isvolsky on October 14th 1908),⁽³⁾ especially as it was likewise then proposed that funds should be found in London.

M. Sazonow's proposals have some similarity to those of M. Isvolsky, and where they differ seem to me on that very account still less acceptable.

I think it is doubtful whether, in any circumstances, British capital would be interested in a line from Enzeli to Tehran, even as part of the proposed Trans-Persian line. It might be possible to interest it if the Enzeli-Tehran line were part of a line to Mohammerah, but I am exceedingly doubtful about this; and in any case it would have to be very carefully considered, and the southern section of such a line could not be deferred until the northern one had been built.

A. P.

Feb[ruary] 14th, 1911.

If we refuse this proposal outright we shall be accused of want of goodwill. Moreover, I think that there are now the elements of a deal, which were lacking in 1908.

A line from Mohammerah or from Khor Musa to Tehran and from Tehran to Enzeli constructed with Franco-British capital and with a Russo-British guarantee might be seriously considered.

We might reply that H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] will take the question into serious consideration but that construction from the Gulf north to Tehran would have to be undertaken at the same time and refer Sir G. Buchanan to the 1908 correspondence⁽⁴⁾ respecting the Mohammerah-Julfa line.

Consult I[ndia] O[ffice] and B[oard] of T[rade].

L. M.

M. Sazonow says that he cannot give the revised agreement to the German Ambass[ado]r until he receives some assurances from London and Paris. We could not possibly give any assurances as to British financial participation in the northern line without ourselves being

⁽³⁾ [v. Gooch & Temperley, Vol. VI, p. 452, No. 343, *min.*, and note ⁽³⁾.]

⁽⁴⁾ [cp. Gooch & Temperley, Vol. VI, pp. 358-9, No. 254; p. 402, No. 300; pp. 451-4, No. 343, *mins.*]

assured that the Russian Gov[ernmen]t would be prepared to guarantee a minimum rate of interest on bonds and shares. M. Sazonow also states that the Duma would never sanction any Gov[ernmen]t guarantee for railways in Persia. He can hardly expect British capital to be invested in railways solely facilitating Russian trade without any Gov[ernmen]t guarantee at all. And this would also apply to the Tehran-Khanikin line. At the same time it would be undesirable to refuse outright or to delay the comm[unicatio]n of the draft agreement to the Germans.

M.

No. 687.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

5394/48/11/44.

Tel. (No. 49.)

Foreign Office, February 14, 1911, 11 P.M.

Your telegram No. 36, Secret.⁽²⁾

We should be quite willing to see British capital help in construction of railways to secure better access for British and Russian trade to Persia. We are at present considering how by certain lines in Southern Persia British trade could be enabled to compete with rival routes from Mesopotamia. We are moved to do this by motives precisely corresponding to those which influence Russian Gov[ernmen]t with regard to Enzeli-Teheran line. In this connection it would be well for you to refer Russian M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] to the 1908 correspondence⁽³⁾ respecting Mohammerah-Julfa line. When project of Southern lines is more advanced I will make a further communication to you, but we foresee great difficulty in getting British capital to invest even in Southern lines without a Government Guarantee, and shall have to face that question ourselves, when the time comes. The same difficulty is not less with regard to lines in Northern Persia, and, with every wish to help Russian Gov[ernmen]t, it would probably be impossible to induce British capital, which is in no sense under Gov[ernmen]t control, to invest money in Persian railways without some guarantee, and if we decide to give any guarantees ourselves we can of course only do it for Southern lines.

I hope Russian M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] will see that it is impossible for us to induce British capital to do for Russian trade in Northern Persia what we could not induce it to do for British trade in Southern Persia, viz., to invest money without a guarantee. We had assumed, in case of Teheran-Khanikin line that there would be a Russian guarantee, or if not then an international guarantee.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Paris (No. 34).]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

⁽³⁾ [cp. immediately preceding document, mins., and note ⁽¹⁾.]

No. 688.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

5394/48/11/44.

(No. 46.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 15, 1911.

I told the Russian Ambassador to-day of the substance of your telegram No. 36, Secret,⁽²⁾ and of my telegram in reply.⁽³⁾

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the Cabinet Committee, with the two immediately preceding documents.]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 662-3, No. 686.]

⁽³⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

I explained to him that our great difficulty would be to induce British capital to invest in railways in the south of Persia. I anticipated that British capital would not do this in any railway in Persia without a Government guarantee. British capital could not be expected to do for Russian trade in the north of Persia what it would not do for British trade in the south.

The idea that the Russian Government might be unable to give a guarantee for the proposed railway in the north of Persia was new to Count Benckendorff, and caused him some surprise.

I also told him that M. Sazonow apparently thought that he could not proceed with the negotiations with Germany until the Russian railway in the north of Persia was assured.

I reminded Count Benckendorff that I had stated at the beginning of these discussions about the Potsdam negotiations that it would be a great pity if the Russian negotiations with Germany were broken off, as it would certainly make the relations between Russia and Germany difficult.

Count Benckendorff was fully alive to this consideration.

I took the opportunity of saying to Count Benckendorff with what great relief I had heard the news of the withdrawal of Russian troops from Kazvin.⁽¹⁾

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

⁽¹⁾ [Sir G. Buchanan's telegram (No. 34) of February 11, 1911, D. 8.12 p.m., R. 8.15 p.m., stated that orders had been given to announce at Tehran the immediate withdrawal of Russian troops from Kazvin. (F.O 371/1177. 5132/51/11/34.)]

No. 689.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir G. Barclay.

Private.⁽¹⁾

My dear Barclay,

Foreign Office, February 15, 1911.

Many thanks for the letter which I received by last bag.⁽²⁾

It is good news that the Russian troops are to be withdrawn from Kazvin, though I am a little puzzled as to why they should leave a squadron of Cossacks there. I daresay this is in accordance with the wishes of the Regent, while the formation of his new Cabinet is pending. He seems to have spoken out very clearly and strongly to the members of the Mejliss, and I hope that his words of wisdom will be properly considered by them.

You will have seen from the telegrams which we received from Buchanan that our hopes that Sazonow had finally emerged from the morass in which he had placed himself have not been entirely realized. He is now requesting that we and France should find the necessary financial assistance to enable Russia to build a railway in the North of Persia and also towards the Turkish frontier. At the same time he informs us that the Duma would never admit any Russian Government guarantee being accorded. In these circumstances it would be quite impossible for us to be able to induce any British capitalists to invest a penny in such enterprises, and I cannot conceive how any sensible man can imagine that foreign financiers would risk their money in the manner which Sazonow suggests. I spoke to Cambon yesterday on the subject, and he was entirely of the same opinion. He characterizes Sazonow as a child who talks in the most lighthearted and ignorant manner, and he is quite sure that the latter's proposals that France should contribute financial aid would not be entertained for a moment unless a Russian Government guarantee were forthcoming. The trouble is that Sazonow informed Buchanan that he would delay communicating to the German Ambassador the draft of the revised agree-

⁽¹⁾ [Carnock MSS., Vol. I of 1911.]

⁽²⁾ [The reference is to Sir G. Barclay's letter of January 27, 1911. It is not reproduced, as it refers to Persian internal affairs. Carnock MSS., Vol. I of 1911.]

ment until he had received from London and Paris the assurances which he solicited. It would seem then that there is still a fear that the negotiations will be either delayed or hung up. I am always afraid that, if Berlin considers that Russia is hesitating unduly in coming to a conclusion, Germany may herself break off all further negotiations. This would be most deplorable, as it would render the relations between Germany and Russia worse than they were before, and would also undoubtedly give occasion for a furious campaign in the German press against ourselves. The fact is that Sazonow has got himself into an almost hopeless tangle, and has evidently made concessions which Russian public opinion will by no means approve of. In these circumstances he appeals to France and ourselves to help him out of his difficulty, but on conditions which it is clearly impossible for us to accept as they at present stand. We sent you last night a telegram in regard to railways in the South of Persia.⁽³⁾ We shall, of course, await your views and those of the Government of India before a final decision is come to here upon the subject, and then instructions will be sent to you as to approaching the Persian Government. I anticipate that we should find considerable difficulty in persuading the Government and the Assembly to grant to us, and possibly to Russia, railway concessions of a somewhat far-reaching character. They might consider that we were actively pursuing a policy of peaceful penetration which might impair their own independence and integrity. This, of course, is far from our thoughts, but I expect it will require all your diplomatic skill and persuasion to induce them to consent to our request. . . .⁽⁴⁾

[Yours, &c.

A. NICOLSON.]

(3) [Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 52) to Sir G. Barclay of February 14, 1911, D. 7.15 P.M., stated that, if the Persian Government were ready to recognise the right of His Majesty's Government to participate in the construction of railways in Southern Persia, His Majesty's Government were ready to discuss such construction with the Persian Government. (F.O. 371/1185 5647/3606/11/44)]

(4) [The omitted paragraphs of this letter refer to the engagement of Swedish officers and American financial assistants by the Persian Government, and other matters not relevant to the subject of the present chapter.]

No. 690.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1287.

5786/48/11/44.

Tel. (No. 39.) Secret.

St. Petersburg, February 16, 1911.

D. 10 A.M.

R. 11.15 A.M.

I spoke to Minister for Foreign Affairs this afternoon in the sense of your telegram No. 49.⁽²⁾ His Excellency said that Russian Ambassador at Paris had telegraphed that the French Minister for Foreign Affairs had expressed himself sympathetically and hopefully with regard to French participation in Enzeli-Tehran Railway, and had promised to lay matter before the Council of Ministers. Your reply evidently depressed him, and, on my asking what he proposed to do, he said that he had told German Ambassador that he would hand him the revised agreement by the end of the week, and that he did not see how he could save Khanikin-Tehran line from the Germans. I urged him to adhere to text which he had shown me,⁽³⁾ and to satisfy Russian public opinion by asking for concession for the line from Enzeli. This would give us time to discuss financial arrangements. He repeated that the Council of Ministers would not consent to this unless we could assure them that Russia would not have to find the capital. I then suggested his

(1) [This telegram is endorsed as having been sent to the King.]

(2) [*v. supra*, p. 664, No. 687.]

(3) [*v. supra*, pp. 660-1, No. 684.]

reverting to formula which I had originally proposed, but he said that they would not accept this either, as they would not be a party to an arrangement which would help Germany to get a footing in North Persia. I pointed out that if Russia would neither contribute necessary capital nor give any guarantee she must abandon all idea of railway construction or of influence in Persia. He replied that might be so, but the Government could not in that case be reproached with having rendered Germany's advance easier for her.

I begged that he would do nothing before I saw him again after the arrival of messenger on Saturday, and remarked that if he could really count on French participation, and if, as he had admitted, Russian houses might contribute something towards cost of Enzeli-Tehran line, it was always possible that the rest might eventually be obtained from private English financiers. His Excellency agreed to wait, but said that it was most important both for Russia and for Europe that an agreement should be arrived at with Germany. Sir A. Nicolson had told Russian Ambassador at London that Turkey was about to approach us with regard to Bagdad Railway.⁽⁴⁾ Turkey had apparently already sounded the German Government on the subject, and the present attitude of these two Governments was one of the results of the Potsdam meeting. If we were going to get what we wanted in the Gulf section he could not understand why we were now taking up the question of South Persian railways.

I replied that it was quite uncertain whether we should get what we wanted. I should be grateful for instructions before Saturday.

MINUTES

M Sasonow certainly carries out Emerson's dictum that "consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds." H[is] E[xcellency] himself suggested that we should apply for a concession for a line from the south of Persia, and now he is at a loss to understand why we should wish to do so. He himself now proposes to hand over the Tehran-Khanikin line to the Germans *because* H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] cannot produce funds for the Enzeli-Tehran line; a most unconvincing reason, since his object in desiring the construction of the Enzeli line by Russia with foreign funds was to disarm criticism of his cession of the Tehran-Khanikin line to Germany, or rather of his admittance of Germany into matters of railway construction in Persia at all. Now he proposes to admit Germany and exclude Russia.

I consider that without some sort of a guarantee it will be impossible, or at any rate very difficult, to induce British investors to look at a railway in N[orthern] Persia. Why should they when they can invest at 5% in the S[outh] Manchurian R[ail]w[ay] with a full guarantee from the Japanese Gov[ernment]?

It might be possible to arrange for a Persian Gov[ernment] guarantee which would attract capital: but I feel that in order to provide such a guarantee there ought to be agreement between the Powers on the whole course to be pursued with regard to railways in *North Persia* at any rate.

At present M. Sasonow is asking H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] to provide funds and have no say whatever in the negotiations which are taking place, and I fear he has already committed himself so far that he cannot retrieve his position with the Germans now.

I think we should press him to define precisely what he wants with regard to the Enzeli line, as we cannot give an unconditional undertaking to provide capital. Then the whole question could be further considered: but I cannot quite see why H[is] E[xcellency] is so disappointed with our last telegram (No. 49).

Even if the British participation in the Bagdad line is settled, that is no reason why we should abandon the question of railways in S[outhern] Persia.

A. P.

February 16th, 1911.

It is of little advantage to recapitulate M. Sasonow's frequent oscillations: but it might be recalled, I am writing from memory, that at one time he said he would in any case secure Russia participating to the extent of 60% in the Tehran-Khanikin line, but later he repudiated any idea of having even contemplated the admission on any terms of Germany into that enterprise. Now he goes back again and says he cannot save the line from the Germans, while later on in this telegram he says that the Russian Gov[ernment] would not be a party to any arrangement that would help Germany to obtain a footing in Persia—and later again he says that if Russia abandons all idea of railway construction and of influence in Persia she could not be reproached with having rendered Germany's advance easier. What do all these conflicting statements mean? I am completely mystified. I think that we need not pay much

⁽⁴⁾ [This subject will be treated in *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. X (II).]

attention to his remarks as to our prospective negotiations with Turkey etc. To me they are almost unintelligible

What instructions are to be given to Sir G. Buchanan? This is not a question to be decided hastily as the matter has reached a critical stage—I would in the first place suggest that C[oun]t Benckendorff be asked to come down here tomorrow and the whole question and position thoroughly explained to him. We must give him a written statement of our views, as I do not trust his memory. He grumbled to M. Cambon that we had said nothing to him as to the Turkish proposals, when as I had thought, he had been told of them and had actually tel[egraphe]d the fact to M. Sazonov

A. N.

No. 691.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.

F.O. 371/1237.

5736/48/11/44.

Tel. (No. 37.)

Foreign Office, February 16, 1911, 4.30 P.M.

Russian M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] has asked us for assurance that British capital will be forthcoming to construct a railway from Enzeli to Teheran for which Russian Gov[ernmen]t are not willing to provide either capital or guarantee.

I do not believe British capital can be induced to invest in any Persian railway without a guarantee. Russian M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] states that French M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] has given sympathetic and hopeful reply as regards French capital. I shall be delighted if French Gov[ernmen]t can get Russian M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] out of his difficulty on this point, but you should ask French M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] what the prospect really is.

No. 692.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

5736/48/11/44.

Tel. (No. 55.)

Foreign Office, February 17, 1911, 2.55 P.M.

Your telegram No. 39.⁽²⁾

Statements of M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] seem so full of inconsistencies that I can only reply by stating my own views categorically on certain points which appear to me to be clear.

1. I entirely agree that a failure of negotiations between Russia and Germany would be politically disastrous after Russia has advanced so far.
2. The disadvantage of giving Khanikin-Teheran line to Germany is a matter which can naturally be weighed better by Russian Gov[ernmen]t than by anyone. If they feel it necessary and can reconcile it with their interests we can hardly press objection, provided Russian Gov[ernmen]t keep their hands free to co-operate with us in other matters arising out of Anglo-Russian agreement.
3. I cannot hold out prospect of British capital being willing to invest in Persian railways without some guarantee. I should have doubted French capital doing so either.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Paris (No. 66) by post.]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 666-7, No. 690.]

4. We do not yet know whether we are going to get what we want in Gulf Section of Bagdad R[ailwa]y. Even if we get this access to Persia for British trade it will still be dependent upon German controlled line from Bagdad to Khanikin and possibly thence to Teheran. It may therefore be important for us to have independent means of access by Southern Persian Railways constructed under conditions which will secure equal commercial advantages, and in any case we desire to take up question of railways in Southern Persia to prevent such projects falling entirely into other hands.

I have communicated substance of the above to Russian Ambassador and have summed up the situation by saying that Russian M[inister for] Foreign] A[ffairs] having promised Germany that a branch from Khanikin to Teheran should be made must confirm his promise, and that when time came some years hence to fulfil the promise Russia must then decide whether she would make the line herself, or get it made by foreign capital, or leave it to Germany to make it. You can speak in this sense to M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs].

No. 698.

Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1287.

5956/48/11/44.

Tel. (No. 11.) Secret.

Paris, February 17, 1911.

D. 5.20 P.M.

R. 10.15 P.M.

Minister for Foreign Affairs told me this afternoon that on 12th February the Russian Ambassador said that he knew that in London it had been suspected that there had been some secret agreement concluded at Potsdam, and that he asked whether there was any such suspicion in the mind of the French Government, for, if so, he was instructed to give the most solemn assurance on the part of the Russian Government that no arrangement had been come to between the Russian and German Governments beyond those communicated to the French Government by the Russian Government.

The French Minister for Foreign Affairs said that the French Government did not suspect their ally of secret agreements with Germany not divulged to them, but that they regretted that they had not been taken into the confidence of the Russian Government before the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs negotiated the arrangements with the German Government. M. Isvolsky then expressed the hope that the French Government would keep the Russian Government informed of any negotiations that they might enter into on the subject of the Bagdad Railway. French Minister for Foreign Affairs said that he would be willing to do so.

MINUTE.

We (F[oreign] O[ffice]) had no suspicion that any secret agreement had been arrived at, whatever certain press quidnuncs may have imagined.⁽²⁾

A. N.

E. G.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram is endorsed as having been sent to the King. It was sent to St. Petersburg.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. infra*, p. 670, No. 695.]

No. 694.

Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

5955/48/11/44.

Tel. (No. 10.) Secret.

Paris, February 17, 1911.

D. 8.45 P.M.

R. 10 P.M.

Persian railways.

I have seen the Minister for Foreign Affairs on the subject of your telegram No. 37 of yesterday.⁽²⁾ He says that the Russian Ambassador asked him on 12th February whether the French Government would facilitate money being found in Paris for an Enzeli-Tehran Railway without a Russian guarantee. French Minister for Foreign Affairs told him that personally he would be glad if the money were forthcoming, but that until surveys and estimates of the cost and other details were gone into it would be impossible to judge whether a French syndicate would entertain the proposals, and if there were no Russian guarantee there would probably have to be some other security. The security which he had in mind was concessions of some sort.

MINUTES.

This is what was to be expected.

My feeling is that in the absence of a Russian guarantee the line would not be built except under a Persian guarantee, which would only be of value after some comprehensive scheme of fiscal reform had been introduced. I should not be surprised if the railway question in Persia were ultimately solved in this manner.

A. P.

Feb[ruary] 18, 1911.

R. P. M.

This might be a possible solution but it will be a long time before a comprehensive system of fiscal reform is introduced or the question of Persian railways of serious practical importance.

That is why I think it a mistake to suggest a discussion of them with the German Gov[ernmen]t.

L. M.

A. N.

It was the German Gov[ernmen]t who first suggested a discussion with us and made a grievance of our not responding.⁽³⁾ I agree that railway construction in Persia is probably remote; but railway concessions might at any time give rise to political difficulties. A Persian guarantee would not attract capital at present unless some European Power or Powers were in some way behind it.

E. G.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram is endorsed as having been sent to the King. It was sent to St. Petersburg.]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 668, No. 691.]

⁽³⁾ [cp. *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. VI, p. 523, No. 400; pp. 553-4, No. 414, *encl.*]

No. 695.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

5956/48/11/44.

Tel. (No. 38.) Secret.

Foreign Office, February 18, 1911, 5 P.M.

Your tel[egram] No. 11.⁽²⁾ We had no suspicions of the character indicated by the Russian Ambass[ado]r—though we do think that Russian M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] entangled himself too far at Potsdam. We however admit that the latter has been quite frank with us as to his difficulties. You might mention the above carefully to French M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs].

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to St. Petersburg.]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 669, No. 693.]

No. 696.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

St. Petersburg, February 18, 1911.

6086/48/11/44.

D. 8.35 P.M.

Tel. (No. 42.) Secret.

R. 10 P.M.

Your [*sic*: ? My] telegram No. 39.⁽²⁾

Minister for Foreign Affairs told me today that the Council of Ministers had virtually accepted his revised draft of Russo-German agreement with the following additions to the articles of which I gave substance in my telegram No. 33.⁽³⁾

In order to satisfy public opinion here with regard to northern railways, article 2 will commence thus: "Russian Government, having the intention of securing the concession for the construction of a system of railways in the north, engages to obtain simultaneously a concession," the rest of the article standing as it was.

A fourth article is added to the following effect:—

"Should the Russian Government waive, in favour of other concessionnaires, its rights with regard to linking up lines mentioned in article 2, all the other stipulations of the agreement will remain in force."

Object of this article is to guard against danger of Germany refusing to be bound by the terms of the agreement should Russia cede railway to an international syndicate. His Excellency said he would say nothing to Germany about the possible participation of English and French capital, as present formula would give him time to make what financial arrangements he liked.

Minister for Foreign Affairs hopes that revised draft will be finally sanctioned by the Council of Ministers and the Emperor, and delivered to the German Ambassador in a few days.

(1) [A copy of this telegram was sent to the India Office.]

(2) [*v. supra*, pp. 666-7, No. 690.]

(3) [*v. supra*, pp. 660-1, No. 684.]

No. 697.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1185.

St. Petersburg, February 18, 1911.

6087/3606/11/44.

D. 8.35 P.M.

Tel. (No. 48.)

R. 10 P.M.

Your telegram No. 55⁽²⁾ and your telegram No. 52⁽³⁾ to Sir G. Barclay.

On my communicating to Minister for Foreign Affairs this afternoon your views with regard to railways in South Persia, his Excellency enquired whether we had any particular line in view.

I replied that nothing had been decided so far, but that I expected shortly to receive a communication on the subject.

(1) [This telegram was sent to Tehran (as No. 57); to Paris by bag. A copy was sent to the India Office.]

(2) [*v. supra*, pp. 668-9, No. 692.]

(3) [Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 52) to Sir G. Barclay of February 14, 1911, D. 7.45 P.M., referred to "the rescript addressed by the Shah to his Minister for Foreign Affairs dated September 16th, 1888, giving priority to the British Government over others in the construction of a Southern Railroad and a positive assurance that no Southern Railway would be granted to a foreign country without consultation with the British Government." It further asked Sir G. Barclay's views as to the desirability of making representations to the Persian Government. (F.O. 371/1185. 5647/3606/11/44.) Sir G. Barclay replied in his telegram (No. 53) of February 20, 1911, D. 2.10 P.M., R. 2.30 P.M., that he would "like to postpone moving for a time," as he thought the Regent might be embarrassed. (F.O. 371/1185. 6356/3606/11/44.)]

I thought it advisable, however, to remind him of what he had said in favour of a railway from Mohammerah to Khanikin, adding that, though no such project had been put forward, question of a line from Mohammerah to Khoremabad had been spoken of, and that I presumed that such a project would equally meet with his approval.

His Excellency replied that he had supported the idea of the first-mentioned line because it would, in his opinion, put a stop to the construction of the Gulf section of the Bagdad Railway. He had submitted to Council of Ministers the telegram in which report of its probable construction had reached him, and the project had met with approval on the same grounds. Minister of Finance and Minister of Commerce had, however, remarked that it would not be so acceptable were the Bagdad Railway to be constructed as well, and he feared that both these Ministers would raise objections to a line running due north from Mohammerah. He would have thought that our railway interests lay more to the south.

I did not pursue subject further, but I think that in view of what he said we had better secure assent of the Russian Government before taking steps towards having the line surveyed.

MINUTES.

I think M. Sazonow is wrong in thinking that a line from Mohammerah to Khanikin would stop the construction of the Bagdad Gulf line, which would pass through a rich country.

I think H[is] E[xc]ellency's objections to a line north from Mohammerah are met by paragraph 4 of Sir E. Grey's tel[egram] No 55 of Feb[ruary] 17 to St. Petersburg.⁽¹⁾

Even in 1908 we considered such a line, with others, essential to our trade interests.⁽²⁾ We have £750,000 a year of trade with Persia via Bagdad, and this trade we might divert by building a line north from Mohammerah. It seems unreasonable for Russia, who has agreed virtually to a German line being joined up with Tehran, to object to our taking measures of protection in the interests of our long established trade.

A. P.

Feb[ruary] 20, 1911.

If a line is constructed from Enzeli to Tehran and from Khanikin to Tehran, our commercial interests *may* suffer in the end and, if Sir G. Barclay and the Gov[ernmen]t of India are in favour of our trying to obtain a right to a concession, I think that we should do so, in order to block others and to be in a position to negotiate. As a matter of fact, it is very doubtful whether a line from Mohammerah northwards would greatly benefit our trade, according to Lord Curzon with whom I discussed the subject the other day, as the river borne traffic will always be cheaper and much must depend on the conditions which we obtain in the Gulf End of the Bagdad Line.

I see no particular object in the survey at present. The line is already surveyed as far as Dizful, but we have not had either Sir G. Barclay's views or those of India and should wait before replying to this telegram.

L. M.

A. N.

E. G.

⁽⁴⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 668-9, No. 692.]

⁽⁵⁾ [*cp. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. VI, pp. 358-9, No. 254.]

No. 698.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

6648/48/11/44.

(No. 55.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 18, 1911.

Count Benckendorff spoke to me to-day about a guarantee for the Tehran-Khanikin railway, saying that evidently it had been a British guarantee which M. Sazonow had had in mind.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the Cabinet Committee.]

I said that of course it was out of the question that there should be a British guarantee for a railway in the north of Persia or for the Tehran-Khanikin line: for the claims of British Colonies, or of other places in which we were directly interested, would certainly have priority.

He then asked whether we would join in an international guarantee.

I replied that, if Russia, France, and Germany were all to guarantee the Tehran-Khanikin line, I personally should be in favour of joining in that guarantee, because I should then judge the matter, not as a commercial question, but as a means of political agreement. I could not, however, commit the Government, or do more than express my own personal opinion, at this stage.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

No. 699.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

7161/48/11/44.

(No. 44.) Secret.

St. Petersburg, D. February 21, 1911.

Sir,

R. February 27, 1911.

Since the departure of the last Messenger the Russo-German negotiations have been advanced a stage; and Monsieur Sazonow has at last, after much hesitation and after repeatedly changing his position, succeeded in remodelling the Draft Agreement to his own and his colleagues' satisfaction. The difficulties, with which he has had to contend during the past fortnight, have proceeded not so much from the side of Germany as from the opposition which some of his proposals have encountered in the Council of Ministers.

In my despatch No. 37 of February 9th⁽²⁾ I reported that the telegrams which he had received from the Russian Ambassadors in London and Paris, had awakened him to the necessity of taking more account of the wishes of the British and French Governments. Such an impression, indeed, did these telegrams make on him that, after pondering over the matter for forty-eight hours, His Excellency sent for me and protested in an agitated and reproachful tone that his attitude with regard to the Tehran-Khanikin Railway had been completely misunderstood by His Majesty's Government. Had he not, he said, explained to us both before and after Potsdam that the possession of this line was a matter of vital moment to Russia? Why then were we now working ourselves up into a state of excitement over it, in a way that we had never done over the Bagdad Railway question? Could I tell him what had happened? Had Count Benckendorff, who appeared nervous and excited, exaggerated matters? He had hoped that Sir A. Nicolson, who knew him and Russia so well, would have had more confidence in him, but he feared from the latter's language to Count Benckendorff that this was not the case. He was aware that much of the uneasiness felt at Paris on the subject was due to the fact that the French Ambassador had misrepresented him and had given his Government to understand that he had actually broached the question of the cession of the line to Germany with Count Pourtalès.

I replied that His Majesty's Government perfectly understood the special position, which Russia occupied with regard to the line in question, but that they did not wish to see it pass into German hands. I had never told His Majesty's Government that he had submitted to Count Pourtalès a proposal for its cession,

(1) [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and as having been seen at Berlin.]

(2) [*v. supra*, pp. 655-9, No. 682.]

but I had felt it my duty to warn them that such a cession was an eventuality with which they might one day be confronted. I reminded His Excellency of all that he had said to me of the financial difficulties which prevented Russia engaging to construct the line herself, and asked what other impression his language could possibly have left on me, but that he was seriously contemplating this step. All that Monsieur Sazonow was able to answer was that it was not he, but the Minister of Commerce, who had in the Council of Ministers contended that, as the line could only further Germany's economic interests, it was better that she should bear the cost of its construction. He had personally always advocated keeping the control in Russia's hands and had been endeavouring to effect an arrangement, under which Russia would have participated to the extent of 60%. The fact that the railway could not be built for another six years would have given him time to get over the financial difficulty.

I did not think it necessary to continue the discussion further, so I merely observed that any apprehensions which might have been felt in London would have been set at rest by my telegram No. 30 of the 8th instant⁽³⁾ in which I had reported my last conversation with His Excellency. On my repeating to him what I had said in that telegram, Monsieur Sazonow remarked that I had exactly expressed his views, though he subsequently attempted to deduce from a conversation which Count Benckendorff had had on the previous day with Mr. Tyrrell, on the subject of British participation, that our fears were not yet allayed. I reassured him on this point, and he then proceeded to impress on me the importance of our saying nothing either in financial or diplomatic circles respecting the idea of the participation of British capital in the Tehran-Khanikin Line, for fear of its getting to Germany's ears. After a few more remarks on the same subject, His Excellency somewhat unexpectedly said that he would give me the "*primeur*" of the revised text of the Draft Agreement, although it had not yet been submitted either to the Council of Ministers or to the Emperor. He could not let me take a copy of it, as he wanted to be in the position to say to Germany, should the text again be divulged, that the only copies in existence were in the possession of the two Ministries for Foreign Affairs. He would, however, allow me to read it. I thanked His Excellency for this proof of confidence; and I had subsequently the honour to forward to you a summary of its contents in my telegram No. 33 of the 11th instant.⁽⁴⁾

I called again on Monsieur Sazonow on the 13th instant to convey to him your thanks and appreciation of the friendly communication, which he had made to us. His Excellency expressed himself as much pleased with this message, but said that a fresh difficulty had arisen. The Council of Ministers had objected to the engagement which Russia was to take with regard to the construction of the Tehran-Khanikin Line, on the ground that the Russian public would denounce the Government for spending money on a railway, which was to open the Persian markets to German trade, before they had taken any steps to provide for the construction of a railway in the north, which would render a similar service to Russian goods. He thought that a line from Enzeli to Tehran would suffice to tranquillise public opinion; but unfortunately the Duma would never allow the Russian Government to give a guarantee for any railway in Persia, while railways were so urgently needed in the interior of Russia. He must therefore appeal to Paris and London for financial assistance; and he hoped that the financiers, who were interesting themselves in the Tehran-Khanikin Line, would be disposed to take up the northern line as well. The line from Enzeli to Tehran might eventually constitute the first section of the Trans-Persian railway and, apart from this prospective advantage, was likely to prove a more profitable investment than the Tehran-Khanikin Line. While the two lines might be treated as one as far as the

⁽³⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 651-2, No. 630.]

⁽⁴⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 660-1, No. 684.]

financial arrangements for their construction were concerned, complete secrecy must be observed with regard to the latter until after the publication of the Russo-German Agreement.

I suggested that His Excellency might meet this new difficulty by announcing, simultaneously with the publication of the above-mentioned agreement, that the Russian Government were taking steps to obtain from the Persian Government a concession for a line from Enzeli to Tehran. The question of financing the line could, I thought, be left for future discussion. Monsieur Sazonow replied that he could not ask for the Concession until he was sure of being able to find the necessary capital, as it was most important that this line should be commenced as soon as possible, so as to forestall the line from Khanikin to Tehran.

On the receipt of your telegram No. 49 of the 14th instant,⁽⁵⁾ I informed Monsieur Sazonow that, without a guarantee on the part of the Russian Government, it would be very difficult for us to induce British capital to participate in either of these railways; that we were ourselves considering the question of the construction of railways in southern Persia for the promotion of our economic interests; that we might eventually have to face the question of a guarantee; and that we could not compel British capital to do in northern Persia what it would probably refuse to do in southern Persia, viz., build railways without a Government guarantee. This communication seemed greatly to depress His Excellency. Monsieur Pichon, he said, had taken a more hopeful and sympathetic view of the question, and he did not attempt to conceal his disappointment with our answer. He had, he said, promised to hand Count Pourtalès the revised Draft of the Agreement by the end of the week and, in view of what I had told him, he did not see how he could now prevent the Tehran-Khanikin Line passing into the hands of Germany. I said that he could do this by adhering to the formula which he had inserted in his new Draft, and by at the same time obtaining a concession for the Enzeli-Tehran Line, or by reverting to the formula that I had originally suggested to him, under which Russia would reserve the right of inviting the participation of foreign capital. It was quite unnecessary to hand over the railway to Germany straight off. It would be time enough to do so, if in a few years' time he found it impossible to raise the necessary capital either at home or in Paris and London. He should remember, moreover, that Russia's refusal either to give a Government guarantee or to subscribe her quota of the capital might entail the renunciation of her policy of railway construction in Persia and the consequent loss of her influence and prestige. Monsieur Sazonow replied that this might be the case, but he feared that the Council of Ministers would not sanction either of the alternatives, of which I had spoken. They would, he said, be "stoned" were they to contribute to an undertaking which would open the door to German goods in the south and leave it shut to Russian trade in the north. They could not, on the other hand, be reproached should the Tehran-Khanikin line be constructed in spite of their keeping entirely aloof from it. His Excellency, however, promised that he would do nothing till I saw him again after the arrival of the messenger in three days' time.

At the close of our conversation Monsieur Sazonow observed that it was most important, both in the interests of Russia and of Europe, that an agreement should be arrived at between Russia and Germany. Sir Arthur Nicolson had given Count Benckendorff to understand that Turkey was about to approach us on the subject of the Bagdad Railway. She would certainly not take such a step without first assuring herself that it was approved at Berlin, and he thought that this more friendly disposition on the part of the German and Turkish Governments was the indirect result of the Potsdam interview. His Excellency evinced considerable curiosity with regard to the lines on which the approaching negotiations were to be conducted, and concluded by saying that if we were going to get all we wanted with regard to the Gulf Section, he could not understand why we were now taking

(5) [*v. supra*, p. 664, No 687.]

up the question of railways in south Persia. I replied that His Majesty's Government were as anxious as His Excellency that the present negotiations should be brought to a satisfactory conclusion, but that, as regarded his last remark, it was by no means certain that we should obtain what we wanted relative to the Gulf Section of the Bagdad Railway.

When I saw Monsieur Sazonow on the 18th instant after the receipt of your telegram No. 55 of the preceding day,⁽⁶⁾ I was agreeably surprised to find that His Excellency had overcome the opposition of his colleagues to the wording of Article II, which deals with the Tehran-Khanikin Railway, by inserting a few lines at the commencement, calculated to allay any apprehensions that might be felt here with regard to the northern railway. Monsieur Sazonow allowed me to read once more the revised text of the Agreement in, what he gave me to understand would be its final form. It now consists of a Preamble and four Articles.

The Preamble records the principle of commercial equality, recognises Russia's special political interests in Persia and ascribes a purely commercial character to the interests of Germany.

Article 1 is a revised reproduction of the fourth Article of the original draft and the only important difference that I was able to detect was the omission of all reference to concessions of a territorial character.

Article II reads, as far as I can remember, as follows:—"The Russian Government, having the intention of securing from the Government of the Shah the concession for the construction of a system of railways in the North, engages to obtain simultaneously a concession for a linking up line for the Sadijeh-Khanikin Railway" (without Tehran being specified as the junction), "when that branch of the Konieh-Bagdad Railway shall have been completed."

Article III states that Russia will place no obstacles in the way of "cette entreprise," though she cannot be required to make any financial sacrifices. In the text which Monsieur Sazonow showed me on the 10th instant, the Konieh-Bagdad Railway was, if I am not mistaken, referred to as "the above-mentioned railway"—or words to that effect—instead of "cette entreprise." The article concludes with a revised version of the former third Article respecting the railways to the North of Khanikin, Germany engaging not to lend her material or diplomatic support to any such enterprise, without a previous understanding with the Russian Gov[ernmen]t.

Article IV is to the following effect:—"Should the Russian Government waive, in favour of other concessionnaires, its rights with regard to the linking-up line, provided for in Article II, all the other stipulations of the present Agreement shall remain in force."

The object of the above article is to guard against the danger of Germany repudiating her obligations under the Agreement in the event of Russia ceding her rights with regard to the Tehran-Khanikin line to any third parties. Monsieur Sazonow told me that he did not intend to say anything to Count Pourtalès respecting the possible participation of French and British capital. The formula which he was now submitting would give him a perfectly free hand and enable him to make what financial arrangements he liked when the time came. It was probable, he thought, that Germany would insist on inserting in the second Article after the words "engages to obtain simultaneously a concession for," the words "and to proceed to the construction of," but this was a small matter to which he would raise no objection.

In the course of our conversation His Excellency reverted once more to the question of our railways in south Persia and enquired whether we had any particular lines in view. I told him that, though I expected shortly to receive a communication on this subject, I could give him no information, as nothing whatever had been decided at present. He would perhaps remember having spoken to me strongly a

(⁶) [*v. supra*, pp. 668-9, No. 692.]

few weeks ago in favour of our constructing a line from Mohammerah to Khanikin. So far as I had been able to ascertain no such project had ever been put forward, but I believed that a line from Mohammerah to Khuramabad had been spoken of; and I presumed that this project would find equal favour with His Excellency. Monsieur Sazonow replied that he had spoken as he had done in favour of a Mohammerah-Khanikin railway because he believed that such a line would strike a death-blow to the prolongation of the Bagdad Railway to the Gulf. The Council of Ministers, to whom he had communicated what he had heard on the subject, had approved the project on the same grounds. The Ministers of Finance and Commerce had, however, remarked that two such parallel railways would be "*de trop*," and he very much doubted whether they would approve of a railway running due north from Mohammerah to the Russian sphere. He would have thought it would be more in our interests to construct railways further south and he did not see what great advantages we would derive from such a line, as it would run for a considerable distance along the banks of the Karun.

On my calling on His Excellency this afternoon, Monsieur Sazonow informed me that he had just handed to the German Ambassador the revised draft of the Russo-German Agreement which he had shown me on Saturday. He had, he said, endeavoured to impress on Count Pourtalès that he had gone as far as he could to meet the wishes of his Government and had expressed the hope that the German Government would accept the Agreement as it stood and would confine itself to proposing purely verbal alterations. Count Pourtalès had reciprocated this wish and had personally raised no objections to the text.

In the course of our further conversations Monsieur Sazonow once more referred to the subject of our approaching negotiations with Turkey. He had, he said, questioned the German Ambassador on the subject, but His Excellency had professed entire ignorance. I told him that all that I knew was that we had informed the Turkish Ambassador in London that our ears were open to anything that the Turkish Government might wish to say to us on the subject of the Bagdad Railway and that, so far as I was aware, no definite proposals had as yet been submitted to us. I think, however, that it would be advisable to satisfy His Excellency's curiosity, so far as we could do so and to allay any apprehensions which he may entertain on the subject by promising to keep him informed as to the course of these negotiations. I see from Sir F. Bertie's telegram No. 11 of the 17th instant⁽⁷⁾ that Monsieur Pichon has given Monsieur Iswolsky such an assurance, and I fear that if we fail to do the same Monsieur Sazonow may think that we are wanting in confidence towards him.

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

(7) [*v. supra*, p. 669, No. 693.]

[*ED NOTE*.—On February 21, 1911, M. Sazonov became ill and was unable to attend to business until the following December. The seriousness of his illness was reported by Sir G. Buchanan in a private telegram of March 9. (Grey MSS., Vol. 35.) M. Neratov was appointed Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs. The Russo-German negotiations were resumed in May. "*infra*, pp. 698-9, No. 721.]

No. 700.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1185.
 6669/3606/11/44.
 Tel. (No. 48.)

St. Petersburg, February 22, 1911.
 D. 9.10 P.M.
 R. 10 P.M.

Your telegram No. 63.⁽²⁾

I would strongly advise our consulting the Minister for Foreign Affairs before commencing proposed survey, as if we do not do so he may think, after what he said to me, that we are not acting straightforwardly. His repeated references in my recent conversations to our approaching negotiations with Turkey and Germany gives me the impression that he rather suspects that we are keeping something back from him. In the *aide-mémoire* of 15th August, 1908,⁽³⁾ Russian Government stated that it would be necessary to concert measures to prevent proposed Julfa-Mohammerah Railway injuriously affecting Russia's economic interests in the north. It would therefore, I think, be well to tell him that we want to make a survey as a preliminary step, but that we would not commence construction of the line without coming to an understanding with the Russian Government.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram is endorsed as having been sent to the King. It was sent to Tehran (as No 62).]

⁽²⁾ [In his telegram (No. 63) of February 21, 1911, D 4 P.M., Sir Edward Grey asked whether it would be advisable to obtain Russian concurrence before commencing a survey in Southern Persia. (F.O. 371/1185 6356/3606/11/34.)]

⁽³⁾ [The Russian *aide-mémoire* of August 2/15, 1908, was sent to Sir Edward Grey by Sir A. Nicolson as an enclosure in his despatch (No. 366, Secret), D. August 18, R. August 31, 1908 (F O 371/503 30048/7568/08/34.) The British reply was dated October 14, 1908, and reference to it is made in *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. VI, p. 452, No 343, *min.*, and *note* ⁽³⁾]

No. 701.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir A. Nicolson.⁽¹⁾

Private.⁽²⁾

My dear Nicolson,

St. Petersburg, February 23, 1911.

Many thanks for your letter of the 14th instant.⁽³⁾

The last fortnight here has partaken of the character generally ascribed to the month of March. It came in like a lion and has gone out like a lamb. The day after the departure of the messenger Sazonow telephoned saying that he wished to see me at once, and on being ushered into his room I found him in a very agitated state of mind. I never made out what was the immediate cause of his uneasiness, but he was evidently rather sore at our attitude with regard to the Teheran-Khanikin line. He was not, however, quite clear in his mind as to whether it was you, I or Benckendorff who was to blame for it. At one moment he expressed himself as being somewhat disappointed with you, saying that he had always hoped that you would be a "point d'appui" for him in London. Then he remarked that

⁽¹⁾ [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Morley. The endorsement is initialled by Sir Edward Grey.]

⁽²⁾ [Carnock MSS., Vol. I of 1911.]

⁽³⁾ [Sir A. Nicolson's letter of February 14 referred to the Russo-German negotiations. It adds nothing of importance to information given elsewhere. Carnock MSS., Vol. I of 1911.]

Benckendorff was nervous and excited and might have exaggerated matters; and finally conveyed to me, by alluding to the manner in which Louis had misrepresented him to his Government, that I had been guilty of the same offence and was responsible for the unnecessary fuss that we were making about the line in question. I told him that I had never accused him of communicating to Pourtalès proposals for the cession of the line to Germany, but that I was bound to inform His Majesty's Government that the language which he had held to me on the subject had given me the impression that he was seriously contemplating such a cession. I repeated to him all that he had said to me on previous occasions; and he could neither deny or explain it away. I succeeded ultimately in pacifying him. He afterwards withdrew for a minute to his Private Secretary's room and fetched the revised draft of the agreement of which he gave me what he termed the "primeur."

I need not give you the substance of our subsequent conversations, which I have reported fully in a despatch.⁽¹⁾ There was a moment when I feared that matters had come to an utter "impasse"; but he ended by taking a sensible course and by adopting a formula which, if accepted by Germany, will give Russia five or six years to arrange for the financing of the line. So far as I could judge from a careful perusal of the agreement, there is nothing in it to which we need take exception. I am afraid, however, that the battle is not yet won and that, although Pourtalès appears to have raised no objections to the text, the German Government will propose alterations which even if they be only in the nature of verbal amendments may seriously affect the tenour as well as the form of the agreement. We shall probably have to wait another week or ten days before knowing what Kiderlen will say, and then the decisive action will be fought. So far, however, we have every reason to be satisfied with the manner in which Sazonow has met our wishes. . . .⁽⁵⁾

Sazonow is constantly referring to our approaching conversations with Turkey and Germany, and from several remarks which he has let drop seems rather nervous as to the course which they may take. Though he has never said so in so many words, he has given me to understand that he would like to be taken into our confidence; and I am afraid that if we do not do so, he may imagine that we are doing things behind his back. I should very much like to be able to allay any such apprehension on his part.

In our conversation on Tuesday he went over the whole history of the Russo-German negotiations, and repeated what he had told me twice already that when he goes to London in two months time he will tell Sir Edward some very curious things respecting them. As I did not wish to leave him under the impression which he at one time seemed to have, that we had suspected his loyalty towards us, I told him that if, as we had heard, the Russian Government believed that we had attributed to them the intention of concluding a secret agreement with Germany I could give him the positive assurance that neither Sir Edward nor you had ever entertained such a suspicion. You had both, I added, much appreciated the frank manner in which he had kept us informed of all the difficulties with which he had been confronted in the course of the negotiations. He seemed much pleased to hear this. . . .⁽⁵⁾

Yours ever,

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

⁽¹⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 673-7, No. 699.]

⁽⁵⁾ [The omitted paragraphs refer among other matters to China, and to the withdrawal of the Russian troops from Kazvin. They add nothing of importance to information given elsewhere.]

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir G. Buchanan.

Private.⁽¹⁾

My dear Buchanan,

Foreign Office, February 28, 1911.

Many thanks for your last letter.⁽²⁾

I do not think that Sazonow need be at all perturbed as to our attitude towards him, and I do not see what reasons he has for being disappointed with us. It is manifestly impossible to expect any British financiers to advance money without some kind of guarantee, and it is equally clear that, for railways in the North of Persia, this Government would be unable to furnish any. As you know, it is very rare for the Government to give guarantees for such enterprises, and we must reserve ourselves for undertakings in which our trade is directly interested. Were an international guarantee to be forthcoming for the Tehran Kauakin line, we might conceivably be able to participate in it, but as regards this point we have plenty of time before us to come to a decision. As matters stand, I think that the Russians will be fortunate if they secure the consent of the Germans to the draft agreement.⁽³⁾ I trust they may be able to do so, as it would be most unfortunate should the negotiations fall through. We shall be very pleased to see Sazonow when he arrives here, but you might warn him that Grey will be away during the greater part of April, and that it would be well if he could so make his arrangements as not to reach London during that period. It is very important that he and Grey should meet. I wish Sazonow would inform you of the interesting details which he is keeping in his pocket to communicate to us; but I daresay it will be better for you not to press him on the subject. I think that he has been very open and frank with us, and we have certainly no complaint against him on that score. He may rely upon our keeping him fully informed as to whatever may pass between us and Turkey or Germany. At the present moment matters have not advanced at all, and we are still waiting for some written proposals from Rifaat Pasha in regard to the Baghdad Railway, and we shall then see whether they afford us a reasonable basis for discussion. As to Germany, nothing at all is proceeding beyond some conversations as to arranging some method for the interchange of naval information. This is a perfectly harmless question, and is really of no importance, and naturally has no interest for other Powers.

We received the other day some news from Vienna as to the belief of Aehrenthal that a serious crisis was impending at Constantinople, which might lead to the establishment of a military dictatorship. Lowther does not consider that it is likely that affairs will be pushed to that extreme, though there no doubt is considerable difference of opinion between various members of the Turkish Cabinet and also with the Committee. So far as we are informed, it would appear that both Vienna and Berlin would welcome the establishment of a military "Government," as they seem to have lost confidence in the Young Turks.

If you get an opportunity you might inform Sazonow, quite informally and privately, that the visit of the German Emperor to London, for the purpose of assisting at the unveiling of the statue of the late Queen Victoria, has no political significance whatsoever, and is merely a private and family affair. The Emperor, as you know, was a devoted grandson, and we knew that he was most anxious to be present on the occasion. It was therefore thought desirable to anticipate any request on his part by an invitation to be present, which invitation he has gladly accepted. I do not suppose that his stay here will last more than a very few days, and he is to be accompanied by the Empress and his daughter. There is no desire or intention on our part to talk politics during his sojourn here, and so

⁽¹⁾ [Carnock MSS., Vol. I of 1911.]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

⁽³⁾ [The revised text of the draft agreement is described *supra*, pp. 676-7, No. 699. *cp infra*, pp. 719-20, No. 741, *encl.*]

I hope that there will be no misgivings in Petersburg on the subject. We have also privately told the French what I have mentioned above, and they perfectly understand the reasons and object of the visit. . . .⁽¹⁾

[Yours, &c.
A. NICOLSON.]

⁽¹⁾ [The rest of this letter refers to the internal affairs of Persia, the French ministerial crisis, and to personal matters]

No. 703.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.

F.O. 371/1185.

8628/3606/11/34.

Tel. (No. 84.) Secret.

Foreign Office, March 9, 1911, 10 P.M.

Mohammerah-Khorehabad line.

Opinion is agreed in considering this line of primary importance for the protection of British trade in Western Persia, and His Majesty's Government will probably have to approach the Persian Government for a concession. We are anxious to proceed in the matter with the concurrence of the Russian Government, and I should be glad to receive your Excellency's advice as to the best means of overcoming reluctance of Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs.

No. 704.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1185.

8929/3606/11/44.

Tel. (No. 54.) Secret.

St. Petersburg, March 10, 1911.

D. 8.25 P.M.

R. 9 P.M.

Your telegram No. 84, Secret⁽²⁾: Mohammerah Railway.

The only course that I can suggest is that I should discuss matter with Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs when he is sufficiently recovered from his present illness.⁽³⁾ He may, however, be incapacitated some time, and there is no one else at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to whom I can speak to any purpose.

We should, I think, point out that we require this line in order to maintain our economic interests in the regions which it will tap, as they would otherwise be seriously handicapped when once German goods obtain easy access to those regions by means of the branch line to be constructed from Bagdad Railway to North Persia. Foreign competition will then become inevitable, and Russia ought to realise that we must place ourselves on an equality with Germany, even though projected line may somewhat prejudice Russian trade.

We might perhaps invite Russia to associate herself in the undertaking by building northern section from Julfa and render this easier for her by offering financial assistance, but the question of rates will probably present difficulty. See Russian *aide-mémoire* of 15th August, 1908.⁽⁴⁾ We might also submit that proposed line would go far to meet any objections which Government of India may raise to the projected trans-Persian railway.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram is endorsed as having been sent to the King. It was sent to Tehran (as No. 72).]

⁽²⁾ [*v. immediately preceding document.*]

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 677, *Ed. note.*]

⁽⁴⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 678, No. 700, *note* ⁽³⁾.]

MINUTES

In any conversations Sir G. Buchanan has on the subject it might be more prudent to allude to our trade in *western* rather than in *northern* Persia, so as not to arouse too much Russian susceptibilities.

It is of course very desirable from our point of view that the railway should be continued from Khorremnabad northwards, and I think we should eventually try to devise some scheme of assisting Russia financially to continue the line, though it has already been shown in our reply (dated October 14th 1908) to the Russian *note-memoire* to which Sir G. Buchanan here alludes that differential rates are impracticable.

British trade *via* Bagdad to Kermanshah is nearly one million sterling a year in value; if this volume of trade is diverted to the less circuitous route via Khor Musa and Khorremnabad, then the proposed line of railway between those two places would at once pay owing to the large amount of traffic. In fact the railway promises to be a prosperous one: if this is so, I do not believe we should have great difficulty in financing, by recourse to the London market, a continuation of the line towards the north, such continuation to be carried out under Russian auspices.

M. Sazonow may be ill for some time (his temperature was 103 on Thursday) and it will be inconvenient to wait, but it seems almost inevitable, unless Sir G. Buchanan could send a note to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs pointing out that we consider it important to approach the Persian Government without delay, but that we at present only wish to obtain a concession for an option to construct, and that before we exercise that option we will discuss the subject very fully with the Russian Government and carefully consider how Russian trade interests can be safeguarded, and also how far we can encourage British capital to invest in a Russian line from Julfa to link up with the proposed line from Mohammerah. It does seem important that we should get the option to construct soon, if only for tactical reasons.

A. P.

March 11th, 1911.

R. P. M.

This is the best line for us to take. Instruct Sir G. Buchanan accordingly but leave it to his discretion whether to await M. Sazonow's restoration to health or to put in a note at once. It is important that there should not be too much delay and I still think that it would be as well for Sir G. Barclay to remind the Persian Government of their promise to us, in the first instance.

L. M.

A. N.

E. G.

Please draw up a telegram.⁽⁵⁾ It should go off as soon as possible in view of Sir G. Buchanan's subsequent request for instructions.

L. M.

Repeat Tehran.

⁽⁵⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 678, No. 700, *note* ⁽³⁾. *cp. also Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. VI, p. 452, No. 343, *min.*, and *note* ⁽³⁾.]

⁽⁶⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 87) of March 11, D. 3.40 p.m. It was repeated to Tehran (No. 72). It is not reproduced as the substance is given above. (F.O. 371 1185, 8929/3606/11/34A.)]

No. 705.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1176.

9841/1/11/34.

(No. 78.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 14, 1911.

Count Benckendorff reminded me to-day⁽²⁾ that the Russian Government had expressed sympathy with the Trans-Persian railway proposal, and had said that

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to Lord Morley.]

⁽²⁾ [For further reference to conversation between Sir Edward Grey and Count Benckendorff on March 14, *v. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. VI, p. 603, No. 448; p. 604, No. 450. *cp. also Siebert*, pp. 563-6.]

they could not express a more definite opinion before having a project put before them by a "Comité d'Études." It was now desired to form a Russian "Comité d'Études," and Count Benckendorff pressed me as to whether the British Government could not say something sympathetic.

I asked whether the "Comité d'Études" would expect a guarantee.

Count Benckendorff replied that the idea was that the Russian Government should promise them the profit on the transit through Russia of all goods for the Trans-Persian railway. This railway would bring increased traffic to the Russian lines in Russia, and the profit on this increase would amount to about $4\frac{1}{2}$ million roubles a-year. This was something to begin with.

I observed that, since M. Sazonow had been so positive that no guarantee could be given by the Russian Government for any Persian railway, I had assumed that the project could not make much progress. But, nevertheless, we had lost no time in communicating with the Government of India. I would now look into what had passed, and let him have a reply.

He reminded me that the Emperor took great interest in the question.

[I am. &c.]

E. G[REY].

No. 706.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1185.

9984/8606/11/44.

Tel. (No. 58.)

St. Petersburg, March 19, 1911.

D. 8.15 P.M.

R. 10 P.M.

Your telegram No. 87⁽²⁾: Mohammerah-Khoremsabad Railway.

I spoke today to the President of the Council, and left with him memorandum. His Excellency had been prepared for what I had to say by the Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs, with whom I had discussed the question a few days ago.

President of the Council said that the proposed line was in neutral zone, and that Russia therefore had no legal right to protest, but that it was none the less one to which she had strong objections. Moscow merchants would at once declaim against Government for allowing seaborne goods to be brought by rail right up to Russian zone, and would represent construction of line by England as an ill-natured act on the part of a friend.

I reminded his Excellency that when the Minister for Foreign Affairs had explained to us the reasons which rendered it imperative for Russia to consent to linking up of the Bagdad and North Persian railway systems we had acquiesced, though we did not like it, out of regard for Russian interests. We hoped that Russia would now show equal consideration for ours. Recent debate in the House of Commons⁽³⁾ showed state of public feeling on the question of these railways, and this line was necessary to enable us to compete on equal terms with Germany, who might differentiate against our goods on the Bagdad and Khanikin lines. Russia was opening Western Persia to German trade, and could hardly shut it to ours.

His Excellency admitted (?) force of these arguments, but was evidently pre-occupied by the opposition which the proposed line is likely to evoke here. He asked whether goods we sent to Persia were of the same class as those Russia sent. I repeated that all we wanted to do at present was to obtain option, and that before proceeding to construct the line we would discuss all such questions thoroughly with the Russian Government. He said that illness of Minister for Foreign Affairs placed

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram is endorsed as having been sent to the King.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 682, No. 704, *min.*, and *note* (6).]

⁽³⁾ [*v. Parl. Deb.*, 5th Ser., (House of Commons), Vol. 22, pp. 1281-1300 and pp. 1327-44.]

him in difficult position, but that he hoped that his Excellency would be well enough to go to England in May.

I urged him to consent to our asking for concession at once and to postpone detailed discussion till Minister for Foreign Affairs was able to see me or to talk over the matter with you in London.

President of the Council said in conclusion that he would consult Minister of Commerce and let me know result in about a week.

MINUTES.

My feeling is that Sir G. Buchanan might lay stress on the fact, apparently not appreciated at St Petersburg, that the proposed line would merely divert *existing* traffic which already goes to Persia via Bagdad and Kermanshah.

Qv. Draft tel[egram] accordingly.

I believe Lord Curzon will raise the question of our preferential railway rights in Persia on Wed[nesday],⁽¹⁾ and altho[ugh] we could not let out that we are contemplating asking for this particular concession, yet it may be necessary, and perhaps advisable, to say that H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment], on the analogy of the Bagdad line, still think our preferential rights hold good.

I do not think we should wait till May to apply for this concession.

A. P.

March 20th, 1911.

R. P. M.

Telegraph as proposed.⁽⁵⁾

I see no objection to Lord Morley quoting the Shah's rescript.

L. M.

Draft a telegram as proposed for me to see.

E. G.

⁽¹⁾ [v. *Parl. Deb., 5th Ser.*, (House of Lords), Vol. 7, pp. 573-612.]

⁽⁵⁾ [v. immediately succeeding document.]

No. 707.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.

F.O. 371/1185.

9984/8606/11/44.

Tel. (No. 98.)

Foreign Office, March 20, 1911, 9 P.M.

Your telegram No. 58.⁽¹⁾

I entirely approve y[ou]r language.

Y[our] E[xcellency] might also point out to President of Council fact apparently not appreciated at St. Petersburg, that proposed Mohammerah-Khorembad line would merely divert existing traffic which already goes to Persia by Bagdad and Kermanshah and that competition of British goods would probably not be increased. Our object is, primarily, to retain our present position. German trade is assured by Potsdam agreement of access to Teheran and we must somehow be assured of equal advantages for British trade.

⁽¹⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

No. 708.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾F.O. 371/1185.
11047/3606/11/34A.

(No. 68.)

St. Petersburg, D. March 20, 1911.

Sir,

R. March 27, 1911.

In a conversation which I had with the Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs last week I spoke to His Excellency on the subject of the Mohammerah-Khorramabad Line and suggested that he should warn the President of the Council that I proposed to discuss the question with him in the course of the interview which he was to grant me yesterday. M. Neratow expressed the opinion that, while the Russian Government might raise no difficulties to our asking for an option to construct this line, the matter would be different when the time came for asking their consent to its actual construction.

M. Stolypine's reception of the proposal was even less favourable. After reading the accompanying Aide-Mémoire which I had handed him in accordance with the instructions conveyed to me in your telegram No. 87 of the 14th instant.⁽²⁾ His Excellency remarked with a smile that I was really not "*en veine*" as this was the second disagreeable subject which I had broached to him on the same day. He admitted of his own accord that, as the proposed railway was in the neutral sphere, the Russian Government had no legitimate right to oppose its construction, though it was one to which they had very strong objections. The Moscow merchants and all those who were interested in Russian trade in northern Persia would at once declaim against the Government for consenting to the construction of a line that would bring British seaborne goods right up to the Russian sphere, while they would represent England's action as unnatural on the part of a friend.

I reminded His Excellency that, before his departure for Potsdam, M. Sazonow had explained to us the reasons which make it imperative for Russia to meet Germany's wishes with regard to the linking of the Bagdad Railway with the future North Persian Railway system as this constituted the only *quid pro quo* which Russia had to offer in return for Germany's renunciation of all further claims in North Persia. We had acquiesced in the construction of the Sadidjeh-Khanikin line, although we had many reasons for objecting to it, because we did not wish to stand in the way of what was a Russian interest. We hoped, therefore, that Russia would in the present case show equal consideration for our interests. His Excellency would have seen from the recent debates in the House of Commons⁽³⁾ that the proposed construction of the Khanikin Railway was viewed with some apprehension in England. In order that we might be able to compete on equal terms with Germany and to guard against the danger of differential rates being in one manner or another applied to our goods on the German railways, it was necessary that we should open up a new route for them by way of Mohammerah and Khorramabad. All that we wanted to do was to maintain our trade with Persia on its present footing, and it did not at all follow that the construction of the proposed line would really increase the volume of that trade. British goods to the value of about £1,000,000 entered Persia every year by the way of Bagdad and Khanikin; and this trade would, were the railway to be built, be carried on by Mohammerah and Khorramabad instead of by Bagdad. The Moscow merchants seemed to think that they could place a veto on all railway construction in Persia, but this was now no longer possible. By her Agreement with Germany Russia was opening western

(1) [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King.]

(2) [v. *supra*, p. 682, No. 704, *min.*, and *note* (6).]

(3) [v. *Parl. Deb.*, 5th Ser., (House of Commons), Vol. 22, pp. 1281-1300 and pp. 1327-44.]

Persia to German goods and she could not with a good grace shut that door in the face of goods belonging to a friend.⁽¹⁾

His Excellency was unable to contest the justice of these arguments, but was evidently not prepared to face the opposition which the construction of the projected line, with the consent of the Russian Government, is likely to evoke in this country. He enquired whether the goods with which we supplied Persia were of the same class as those which Russia exported to that country, as in the matter of textiles the Russians were being undersold by the Germans and he feared that British textile goods would also be cheaper than those exported from Russia. I said that I could not give him any information on this point at present, but that we were anxious to do all that we could to safeguard Russia's commercial interests. For the moment all that we wanted to do was to obtain the option of the line and he might rest assured that we would not proceed to construct it without a thorough discussion of all matters relating to it with the Russian Government.

M. Stolypine remarked that the illness of M. Sazonow placed him at a great disadvantage and rendered it difficult for him to come to a decision. I said that I also deeply regretted the fact that M. Sazonow should be incapacitated by illness at the present moment, all the more so that I had hoped that, had he been able to carry out his intention of going to London, he would have been able to discuss this and other outstanding questions with you. M. Stolypine replied that it was most important that M. Sazonow should pay his promised visits to Paris and London in May, and in view of the progress which he had made towards recovery in the last few days, he thought that it was most probable that he would do so.

Before taking leave of His Excellency I again urged him to consent to our applying at once to the Persian Government for the concession, and suggested that we might leave the detailed discussion as to the construction of the line till M. Sazonow was sufficiently recovered to receive me or till he went to London and was able to talk the matter over with you. M. Stolypine enquired whether I was in a hurry for an answer and on my replying in the affirmative said that he would consult the Minister of Commerce and endeavour to let me know the decision of the Russian Government in the course of the week.

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

P.S. *March 22.*—In a conversation which I had with the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, I went over the whole question once more with His Excellency and endeavoured to make our position clear to him.

M. Neratow put forward two personal suggestions which he begged me to submit to you as likely to facilitate a solution of the question. In the first place he expressed the opinion that the Russian Government were more likely to withdraw their opposition to the proposed line if it were to stop short of Khorramabad, so that its northern terminus might be at a greater distance from the Russian zone. I told M. Neratow that I was too ignorant of the geography of the district, through which the proposed railway was to pass, to be able to say whether such a suggestion was feasible or not. It seemed to me, however, that, now that Russia was about to open the very heart of her zone to German goods, the least she could do was to allow British goods to reach the gates of that zone and that it would not be fair to refuse us this. M. Neratow replied that as it was only now a question of asking for an option, we might be contented with this as a first step. He then put forward his second suggestion which was to the effect that we might encourage the participation of British capital in the railways which Russia proposed to construct in northern Persia.

I reminded him that we had already promised to see how far we could induce British capital to interest itself in a line from Julfa to the South, should Russia wish

⁽⁴⁾ [The subject of this paragraph was reported in Sir G. Buchanan's telegrams (No 58) of March 19, 1911, D. 8.15 P.M., R. 10 P.M. (F.O. 371/1185. 9984/3606/11/34A), and (No 62) of March 21, 1911, D. 8.24 P.M., R. 9 P.M. (F.O. 371/1185. 10459/3606/11/34A).]

to build one, to join the line which we propose constructing from Mohammerah to Khorramabad; but His Excellency gave me to understand that such a line would not have any great attraction for Russia at the present moment and that he was alluding to the Enzeli-Tehran line. I told him that a Representative of a British Syndicate, Mr. Williams, was at this moment negotiating with the Minister of Finance for the construction of the line from Julfa to Tabriz, and that it was, therefore, quite possible that he or his friends might equally interest themselves in the Enzeli Line.

In the course of our conversation I tried to impress on M. Neratow the fact that we were not aiming at more than the maintenance of our trade with Persia on its present footing and that the Mohammerah Line would but serve to carry the goods which at present enter Persia by way of Khanikin. His Excellency expressed the opinion that we should find the line a very difficult one to construct and asked me several questions as to the use we were making at present of the Karun route for trade purposes.

G. W. B.

Enclosure in No. 708.

Aide-mémoire communicated to M. Stolypin by Sir G. Buchanan.

Dans une conversation qu'il a eue le 11/24 février avec le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères, l'Ambassadeur d'Angleterre a fait part à Son Excellence du désir de son Gouvernement d'étudier le tracé d'un chemin de fer entre Mohammerah et Khorremabad. Sir George Buchanan a ajouté que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté ne manquerait pas de consulter le Gouvernement Impérial avant d'en demander la concession au Gouvernement Persan.

Or le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté estime qu'il y aura intérêt de s'adresser au Gouvernement Persan, afin d'obtenir cette concession dans le plus bref délai. Il ne s'agit pour le moment que d'acquérir l'option pour la construction de la dite ligne ainsi que du port à Khor Musa et, avant de se prévaloir de cette option, le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté se propose d'engager une discussion détaillée avec le Gouvernement Impérial. Il ne manquera pas non plus de prêter l'attention la plus sérieuse aux moyens de sauvegarder les intérêts commerciaux de la Russie.

Pour le cas où le Gouvernement Impérial aurait l'intention de mettre en exécution le projet d'une ligne, qui, partant de Djoulfa, se raccorderait avec la ligne Mohammerah Khoramabad, le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté aviserait jusqu'à quel point il serait possible d'encourager la participation des capitaux britanniques dans cette entreprise.

St. Petersburg,

le 15/18 mars, 1911.

No. 709.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 571/1185.

10578/3606/11/34A.

Tel. (No. 65.)

St. Petersburg, March 22, 1911.

D. 8-15 P.M.

R. 10 P.M.

My telegram No. 62: ⁽²⁾ Mohammerah Railway.

I explained our position once more to Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs today. His Excellency made the personal suggestion that it would be easier for the Russian

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram is endorsed as having been sent to the King]

⁽²⁾ [i. immediately preceding document, and note ⁽¹⁾.]

Government to consent were the proposed line to have its northern terminus at a point somewhat farther removed from Russian zone than Khoremad. I reminded His Excellency that Russia was about to admit German goods to the very heart of her zone, and it was therefore hardly fair not to allow British goods even to reach its gates. His Excellency replied that as it was now only a question of asking for an option we might do as he had suggested as a first step. On my explaining that new line would only serve to carry goods that now passed into Persia by Bagdad, his Excellency asked what use we were making at present of the Karun route. I said that I could not answer this straight off.

He also asked whether in return for Russia's consent, we would encourage participation of British capital in the northern railways. I replied that we had offered to do so if Russia wanted to build a line south from Julfa, but he said he was referring to Enzeli-Tehran line. I told him that a representative of an English syndicate was negotiating at present with the Minister of Finance for the construction of a line from Julfa to Tabreez, and that perhaps he might interest his friends in that enterprise.

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs begged me to submit these two suggestions to you as purely personal ones.

(Sent to Tehran.)

No. 710.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.

F.O. 371/1185.
10827/3606/11/34.
(No. 87.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 22, 1911.

I spoke to Count Benckendorff to-day on the subject of Persian railways, telling him generally what you have already urged on M. Stolypin.⁽¹⁾

I explained that a concession for a railway from Mohammerah, was required to protect our interests. Of course, if we were quite sure that British trade would be at no disadvantage on the Bagdad line, the railway from Mohammerah might never be made, unless private enterprise was willing to undertake its construction.

I reminded Count Benckendorff that M. Sazonow had promised at Potsdam that a connection would be provided between the Bagdad Railway and Tehran. The Russian Council of Ministers had at once pointed out that, if access was to be given for German competition to Tehran, Russia must have a railway from Enzeli, which would enable Russian trade to compete with German trade. This seemed so vital to M. Sazonow that he had even asked for British capital to help in making the line, in order to protect Russian trade. It was just as vital for us to be sure of some means which would enable British trade to compete with German trade in the same market. M. Stolypin had admitted the force of your arguments, but had said that Russian feeling could never be reconciled to our proposal. With regard to this, I pointed out that at Potsdam M. Sazonow had obtained certain advantages for Russia, but these advantages could not be had without corresponding disadvantages.

Count Benckendorff asked me how we could suffer if there were equal rights for all trade on the Bagdad Railway.

I replied that supposing, for the sake of argument, there was a certain class of cotton goods, made chiefly in Germany and exported to Persia, which competed with a certain class of woollen goods, made chiefly in England, and also exported to

(¹) [*cp. supra*, pp. 683-7, Nos. 706-8.]

Persia: the rates on the Bagdad Railway might be arranged so that they were low on the cotton goods and high on the woollen goods. It might be contended, if we complained, that the rates on the woollen goods made in Germany were just as high as those on the woollen goods made in England, while the rates on the cotton goods made in England were just as low as those on the cotton goods made in Germany; and that there was therefore no breach of the conditions of the Bagdad Railway Concession.⁽²⁾ But, in practice, there would be great damage done to British trade.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

(²) [*B.F.S.P.*, Vol. 102, pp 833-48.]

No. 711.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1185.

10573/3606/11/44.

Tel. (No. 99.)

Foreign Office, March 24, 1911, 2.40 P.M.

Y[ou]r tel[egram] No. 65.⁽²⁾

Do I understand that we may, as far as the Russian G[overnmen]t are concerned apply for an option to construct a railway as far as Khorremabad; on the understanding that we will come to an agreement with the Russian Gov[ernmen]t before proceeding to construct? There is no suitable place between Dizful and Khorremabad, where a line could stop, as far as I am aware and as the Russian Gov[ernmen]t contemplated the construction of a line from North to South, we should not be obtaining an undue advantage.

Lord Grimthorpe's negotiations are known to me and if the Russian Gov[ernmen]t prefer to construct a line from Enzeli to Tehran and can interest British capital there would be no objection whatever on our part: in fact I would give every encouragement to such a proposal on the understanding that Russia would not oppose a line to Khorremabad, which the Russian Gov[ernmen]t or the Persian G[overnmen]t might eventually link up with Tehran.

The trade returns show that in 1907-08 imports from the U[nited] K[ingdom] amounted to £135,000 and from India £107,000; in 1908-9 imports from the U[nited] K[ingdom] amounted to £81,000 and from India £104,000. The figures for 1909-10 show a large increase due entirely to imports of machinery of Anglo-Persian Oil Company which are temporary.

(¹) [This telegram was repeated to Tehran (No. 88). A copy was sent to the India Office.]

(²) [*v. supra*, pp. 687-8, No. 709.]

No. 712.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1185.

11019/3606/11/34A.

Tel. (No. 70.)

St. Petersburg, March 26, 1911.

D. 4.55 P.M.

R. 6 P.M.

Your telegram No. 99.⁽²⁾

I fear that you have misunderstood my telegram No. 65.⁽³⁾ Russian Government, while admitting that we have right to build railway without their consent,

(¹) [This telegram is endorsed as having been sent to the King. It was sent to Tehran (as No. 92).]

(²) [*v. immediately preceding document.*]

(³) [*v. supra*, pp. 687-8, No. 709.]

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have not yet informed me that they withdraw their objections to our asking for option. I told Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs yesterday that the line could not possibly stop short of Khorremabad, and expressed disappointment at not having yet received a favourable answer from Russian Government. He said that Ministerial crisis was the cause of delay, and that he was awaiting report from Minister of Commerce. I pressed for earliest possible reply.

Head of Persian Department in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, whom I also saw, told me that Russia wants Julfa-Tabreez Railway for strategical as well as for commercial reasons, but that its prolongation to Khorremabad was not desirable at present, as its southern portion would be exposed to attack on the side of Turkey.

I informed him of what you said about participation of British capital in the Enzeli-Tehran line, and suggested that our line from Mohammerah might eventually be linked up with it.

MINUTE.

Prolongation of line would only expose the southern, i.e. non-Russian, portion of the line to attack.

A. P.
R. P. M.
A. N.

No. 713.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.(¹)

F.O. 371/1185.
11413/3606/11/34A.
Tel. (No. 96.)

Foreign Office, March 29, 1911, 6 P.M.

Sir G. Buchanan's telegram No. 74 of March 28th.⁽²⁾ You should unless you consider such action inopportune, make, in such a form as you consider best, an application for a concession for a port at Khor Musa and for a railway from there to Khorremabad, with option to build a branch to Mohammerah. It appears desirable to make this application before beginning the discussion referred to in your telegram No. 96 of March 27th,⁽³⁾ as it is useful, in view of impending discussions in regard to British participation in the Bagdad Railway, that we should obtain option to build line to Khorremabad as soon as possible. There would, if Russian Gov[ernment]t concur, be no objection to entering on the joint discussion with the Regent respecting a general scheme of railway development immediately after you have made the application. Presumably Russian Minister will ascertain his Government's views on proposed discussion.

In making application for Khorremabad line you will be able to decide whether it would be expedient to refer specifically to Shah's pledges as to British preferential rights in Southern Persia: you should be careful to emphasise the fact that all we wish in the first instance is an option and that details can be settled subsequently.⁽⁴⁾

(¹) [This telegram is endorsed as having been sent to the King. It was repeated to St. Petersburg (No. 107).]

(²) [Sir G. Buchanan's telegram (No. 74) of March 28, D. 3.15 P.M., R. 4.30 P.M., summarized the Russian *vide-memoire* which was enclosed in his despatch (No. 78). v. immediately succeeding document. (F.O. 371/1185. 11413/3606/11/34A.)]

(³) [Sir G. Barclay reported in his telegram (No. 96) of March 27, D. 3.20 P.M., R. 3.15 P.M., that he had been approached by the Regent's private secretary to discuss with the Regent and M. Poklevski-Koziell a general scheme for railway construction in Persia. He asked for instructions (F.O. 371/1185. 11287/3606/11/34.)]

(⁴) [*cp. Siebert*, p. 568.]

No. 714.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 371/1185.

12059/3606/11/34A.

(No. 78.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, D. March 29, 1911.**R. April 3, 1911.*

I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of an aide-mémoire communicated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in which the Russian Government express their views on the proposal of His Majesty's Government to apply for a concession for a railway from Mohammerah to Khorremabad.⁽¹⁾

The aide-mémoire was sent to me by the Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs in a private letter in which His Excellency says that I may conclude from its terms that his Government raise no objection to the British proposal.

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

Enclosure in No. 714.

Aide-mémoire.

Sir George Buchanan ayant fait part au Ministère Impérial des Affaires Etrangères de l'intention du Gouvernement Britannique de faire des démarches en vue d'obtenir du Gouvernement Persan une concession pour la construction d'une ligne ferrée partant de Mohammerah et se terminant à Khorremabad le Ministère Impérial a l'honneur de faire à l'Ambassade Britannique la communication suivante.

Etant donné que la ligne projetée se trouve sur tout son parcours dans la zone neutre de la Perse et qu'en vertu de l'article III de la Convention du 18/31 août, 1907.⁽²⁾ concernant la Perse les deux Gouvernements se sont mutuellement engagés à ne pas s'opposer à la recherche de concessions dans cette zone par les deux parties, le Gouvernement Impérial ne saurait nier le droit du Gouvernement Britannique de faire la démarche en question.

Toutefois le Ministère se voit obligé d'attirer l'attention de l'Ambassade sur le fait que la ligne projetée dont le point terminus serait situé dans le voisinage immédiat de la ligne limitant la sphère réservée à l'influence russe, ne pourrait ne pas porter préjudice aux intérêts économiques que la Russie possède en Perse et que par suite il est à craindre que l'opinion publique russe n'accueille d'une façon extrêmement défavorable le fait qu'une pareille concession fût obtenue par l'Angleterre.

C'est avec plaisir que le Gouvernement Impérial prend acte en conséquence de la déclaration du Cabinet de Londres qu'il n'est question en ce moment pour l'Angleterre que de s'assurer la concession dont il s'agit et qu'avant de procéder à la mise à exécution de son projet le Gouvernement Britannique compte entrer dans un échange de vues amical avec le Gouvernement Russe afin de régler d'un commun accord toutes les questions se rattachant à la réalisation éventuelle de cette entreprise.

Le Gouvernement Impérial tient à offrir à l'Ambassade Britannique ses meilleurs remerciements pour sa déclaration amicale certifiant que le Gouvernement Britannique n'a pas d'objection à ce que des capitaux anglais participent à la construction par la Russie de lignes ferrées dans le nord de la Perse.

St.-Petersbourg, le 14/27 mars, 1911.⁽¹⁾ [cp. Siebert, pp. 567-8.]⁽²⁾ [v. Gooch & Temperley, Vol. IV, p. 618, App. I.]

[*ED NOTE*—Sir G. Barclay's telegram (No. 107) of April 1, 1911, D. 2.30 p.m., R. 3.45 p.m., reported that he was presenting a note applying for a concession for a railway as directed in Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 96) of March 29 (*v supra*, p. 690, No. 713). In his telegram (No. 135) of April 25, 1911, D. 2 p.m., R. 4 p.m., Sir G. Barclay gave the reply of the Persian Government. It called attention to the principle laid down by the Shah Nasr-ed-Din that "Permission will never be granted to anyone to construct any other than a purely commercial railway in Persia," and refused the option on this ground. (F.O. 371/1185. 12008/3606/11/34. 15483/3606/11/34.)]

No. 715.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.

Private.⁽¹⁾

My dear Grey,

April 6, 1911.

I have been thinking over the matter, and I have doubts whether it would be quite prudent to reject off hand Russia's proposal to participate in the Gulf section. Our understandings with France and Russia form the basis of our present foreign policy. Germany rarely loses an opportunity of endeavouring to weaken or break up these understandings. Her press proclaimed *urbi et orbi* that at Potsdam a serious breach had been made in the Triple Entente. Russia, repentant of the errors of Sazonow, now wishes to rectify this and to show that the Triple Entente is still vigorous. Were we to decline her offer and at the same time to exclude France from participation, the world would undoubtedly believe that Germany had scored another success and that the understandings had been further weakened.

I do not know whether a quintuple participation i.e. Turkey, Germ[an]y, France, Russia and ourselves would be disadvantageous—provided always we keep absolute control &c. of Koweit. 20% each would give 60% to our group and 40% to Turkey and Germany. Turkey might object to Russia's entry—but she is equally likely to object to her own exclusion and an equal division between ourselves and Germany as we are now contemplating.

I think perhaps the whole question could be fully and frankly discussed with Cambon this afternoon. He is a wise man with wide experience and his views might be instructive.

Y[ou]rs sincerely,

A. NICOLSON.

⁽¹⁾ [Grey MSS., Vol. 54.]

No. 716.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1233.

13381/21/11/44.

(No. 123.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, April 6, 1911.

M. Cambon having told Sir Arthur Nicolson that Count Benckendorff had spoken to him of the desire of Russia to participate in the railway from Bagdad to the Gulf, in order to show him that the good understanding between England, France, and Russia had not been upset by the Potsdam negotiations, I took an opportunity of discussing the matter informally with M. Cambon to-day, Sir Arthur Nicolson being also present.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Morley.]

I observed to M. Cambon that I appreciated the good political intentions of the Russian Government, and the value of what they wished to demonstrate. On the other hand, the Russian suggestion would complicate the negotiations exceedingly. Supposing that France was to have a 20% share in the Bagdad-Gulf section, Russia 20%, and England 20%; and that, in addition, France was to have what she desired with regard to the Syrian railways, part of the Hejaz Railway, railways in the north of Asia Minor, and the Danube-Adriatic Railway, while Russia had the abnegation of German projects in the Russian sphere in Persia: in such circumstances, British public opinion would say that, as France and Russia had these things in addition to a share in the Bagdad-Gulf section equal to ours, we should also get something in addition. My idea was, therefore, that we should not participate in the advantages which France and Russia were to get elsewhere, and that they should not participate in the Bagdad-Gulf section, but allow us to make the best bargain we could with regard to this. We have hitherto asked a share of at least 50%, and if we got this the rest of the section must, I supposed, go to Germany under the German arrangement with Turkey.

M. Cambon said he entirely understood our difficulty. He had told Count Benckendorff that the question as to whether France should participate in the Bagdad-Gulf section was one which concerned us alone. She would participate if we wished her to do so, but she did not regard it as her affair. He was impressed by the desire of the Russian Government to retrieve the blunder which they had made at Potsdam, and he took the same view as I did of their political intentions in the matter, but it was very difficult for them to undo what they had done at Potsdam. He had also pointed out to Count Benckendorff that the consent of Turkey was necessary to Russian participation.

I observed that I had warned Count Benckendorff from the beginning that, while M. Sazonow should reduce as much as possible the difficulties in which he had become entangled at Potsdam, he should not break off the agreement made there with Germany: because the Khanikin-Tehran branch and the other inconveniences in the arrangement were not serious enough to justify a political quarrel between Russia and Germany, which would suit neither Russia nor England, and which I assumed would not suit France either.

M. Cambon asked whether he might tell Count Benckendorff, who was not instructed to make any proposal formally, that I would talk over the matter with him.

I replied that I would do so next week; but I hoped that M. Cambon would explain the difficulties to him, as I should have to point them out to him when he came.

[I am, &c.]

E. G. [REY].

No. 717.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 971/1233.
13720/21/11/44.
(No. 105.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, April 10, 1911.

I asked Count Benckendorff to-day what were the views of his Government with regard to the Bagdad-Gulf section of the Bagdad Railway.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the Cabinet Committee and to Lord Haldane. A copy was communicated to Count Benckendorff.]

He told me that, since Germany had renounced the Bagdad-Gulf section and the matter no longer appeared to be one between England and Germany alone, the Russian Government thought that it would be a good demonstration of the co-operation "à trois" if they, as well as France, participated in the Bagdad-Gulf section. Co-operation "à trois" had rather dropped out of sight, and the Russian Government would like to see it re-established.

I entirely agreed with this, but I explained to Count Benckendorff our difficulty with regard to the Bagdad-Gulf section. As a matter of fact, Germany had not renounced this section: she had stipulated for a participation in it as great as that of any other Power, except Turkey, and the German Concessionnaires had reserved the right to claim an indemnity for loss of profit on kilometric guarantees.

I also told Count Benckendorff that we had not yet sent in our reply to the proposals which the Turkish Government had made to us. When we did reply, we should certainly point out that the position which they now put before us was quite different to that which Djavid Bey had suggested last summer as a possible way of meeting our views. Djavid Bey had then asked us whether we thought that a settlement could be reached if Turkey had a free hand with regard to the Bagdad-Gulf section. We had replied that this might provide a basis for a settlement, provided that, if the participation of foreign capital was invited, our participation was in proportion to our trade: this would give us about 60%. In any case, it would be difficult to reconcile British public opinion to a bargain unless we had at least 50%. But, in the new circumstances created by the German agreement with Turkey, if we had 50%, Germany was also to have 50%, Turkey would drop out of financial participation, and the question would still be one to be discussed between us and Germany.

France, I understood from M. Cambon, wished to secure railway advantages in regions quite different from that of the Bagdad Railway; and she would participate in the latter Railway only if we desired her to do so, for she did not look upon it as her affair.

My view was that Russia should make her bargain as she had begun to do at Potsdam. France should make her own stipulations with regard to the matters in which she was most interested. We ourselves should make the best terms we could about the Bagdad-Gulf section. Then, when we were all three ready, we would simultaneously agree to the increase of the Turkish Customs Dues. Simultaneous agreement of this sort would have an excellent effect.

Count Benckendorff said that the fact that Germany had not unconditionally renounced the Bagdad-Gulf section made a considerable difference. He thought the Russian proposal was founded on the assumption that Germany was out of the question. The Russian desire was to help us, and therefore their proposal would not hold if the question was one between us and Germany alone.

He thought, however, that if it was ultimately decided to have French co-operation, Russia should come in too: for the participation of Russia as well as France, entailing the division of the Railway section into five shares instead of four, might just turn the balance in our favour.

I agreed that, if France came in, it would be desirable that Russia should come in also; and if the negotiations took a turn in this direction, I would bear the point in mind. Meanwhile, I thought it better to leave the question open, and I promised to let Count Benckendorff know how the negotiations progressed. It might be that, as a result of the terms which Germany had made with Turkey, the negotiations would revert to an attempt on our part to arrange a settlement with Germany and Turkey alone, as the only way in which to get the large share in the Gulf section which British public opinion expected.

[I am, &c.]
E. G[REY].

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1234.
15141/21/11/44.
(No. 110.)

St. Petersburg, D. April 18, 1911.

Sir,

R. April 24, 1911.

In the course of a conversation which I had with the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs yesterday I observed that the Russian press had of late been devoting much attention to the Potsdam interview and seemed at a loss to explain the slow progress that was being made with the Russo-German negotiations.

Monsieur Nératow replied that all he could tell me on the subject was that nothing whatever had passed between the two Governments since Monsieur Sazonow had handed Count Pourtalès the revised text of the Draft Agreement.⁽²⁾ He did not know whether this silence on the part of the German Government was to be accounted for by their desire to wait till Monsieur Sazonow was sufficiently recovered to be able to resume the conduct of the negotiations which he had initiated or to some other cause. He, personally, was inclined to believe that they desired to see what would be the outcome of the negotiations which His Majesty's Government were conducting at Constantinople on the subject of the Bagdad Railway before replying to the last Russian proposals.

Monsieur Nératow then proceeded to speak to me on the subject of your conversation with Count Benckendorff, of which you communicated to me the substance in your despatch No. 105 of the 10th instant.⁽³⁾ His Excellency said that he thought it most important that the solidarity of the "Triple Entente" in the matter of the Bagdad Railway should be manifested to the world and that he had, therefore, suggested that Russia, as well as France, should participate in the Bagdad-Gulf section. He understood from what you had told Count Benckendorff that there might be difficulties in the way of the internationalisation of this section; but, if this proved to be the case, the object which he had in view might be attained by an "amorcelement" of the line.

I enquired whether he meant by this that the Bagdad-Gulf section should be divided into different "tronçons" as that would, in my opinion, be very difficult to arrange. His Excellency admitted this and said that it would be sufficient if each of the three Powers acquired an interest in one or other of the different parts of the Bagdad Railway system. Thus were Great Britain to obtain the control of the Gulf section Russia might be given the Sadidjeh-Khanikin branch, while France might take over some other section.

I said that I believed that France's aspirations were fixed on railways in another direction and that, moreover, I did not quite see where she was to come in, unless it was on the Bagdad-Gulf section. Monsieur Nératow thereupon suggested the branch line to Alexandretta but I pointed out that this was an arrangement to which Germany was never likely to consent.

I gather from the above conversation that Monsieur Nératow desires to revert to Monsieur Sazonow's original idea of claiming for Russia the right to construct the Sadidjeh-Khanikin line in the event of Great Britain obtaining satisfaction with regard to the Bagdad-Gulf section (see my despatch No. 482 of the 9th December last).⁽⁴⁾

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Cabinet; to Lord Morley.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp. 673-7, No. 699.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. immediately preceding document.*]

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 572-3, No. 617.]

MINUTES

M Neratow's plan is not very easy to understand and does not appear very practical, but there is a good deal to be said for the admission of Great Britain, France and Russia to 20% each in the Gulf section whereby the three would be able to outweigh German influence represented by 20% German and 20% Turkish control. Such an arrangement would not infringe the new agreement between Turkey and the Bagdad Railway Co[mpany] and might have the further advantage of demonstrating the solidarity of the Triple Entente.

H N.

Ap[ril] 24, 1911.

I entirely agree as to the advantage of a demonstration of the solidarity of the Triple Entente and should prefer, on terms, the internationalization of the Bagdad Gulf section by the admission of France and Russia with the Anglo-German-Turkish group. See minutes with 12979.⁽⁵⁾ If the Turks refuse our proposal for a 50% share, we can fall back on the Russian suggestion

L. M.

I would much prefer, as I have stated in former minutes, that the 5 Powers should participate in the Gulf Section, thus giving the Triple Entente group 60%

A. N.

⁽⁵⁾ [This paper deals with the Bagdad Railway question, which will be treated in *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. X (11).]

No. 719.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 371/1176.

15148/1/11/34A.

(No. 112.) Confidential.

Sir,

St. Petersburg, D. April 18, 1911.

R. April 24, 1911.

Monsieur Khomiakoff and Monsieur Zweguintzow called on me yesterday and spoke to me on the subject of the trans-Persian Railway.

They said that the Russian group had now been constituted and that they were only awaiting the answers of the British and Indian Governments, expressing approval of the scheme, to send delegates to London to enter into negotiations with the group, which, they trusted, would shortly be formed in England. They were most anxious that the reply of His Majesty's Government might soon be forthcoming, as it was most important that they should receive it before people began to leave St. Petersburg in another month. They both took a very optimistic view of the prospects of the railway and expressed the hope that a source of indirect guarantee might be derived from the surplus revenues gained by the Russian and Indian Railways from the increased freights brought them by the new railway.

They finally asked me to forward to you the accompanying confidential statements which they have since sent me in the enclosed letter.⁽¹⁾

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

⁽¹⁾ [Not reproduced. It is concerned mainly with the financial details of the scheme.]

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1176.

15143/1/11/34A.

(No. 129.) Secret.

Sir,

Foreign Office, May 10, 1911.

I have received Y[our] E[xcellency's] Desp[atch] No. 112, conf[idential], of the 18th ult[imo]⁽²⁾ relative to the proposed Trans-Persian Railway and you may inform the Russian Gov[ernmen]t that H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment], after careful consideration of the projects in consultation with the Gov[ernmen]t of India, are ready to assent to it in principle and to agree to the initiation of negotiations between its promoters in this country and in Russia subject to the following conditions:—

- (1) The line shall enter the British sphere at Bander Abbas instead of at Kerman, subject to reconsideration as the result of actual survey, and shall in any case join the Indian railway system at Karachi and not at Nushki.
- (2) There shall be a break of gauge at Bander Abbas, or wherever the line enters the British sphere of influence in Persia.
- (3) In return for the co-operation of Great Britain in the project, which examination has shown to be likely to benefit Russia far more than Great Britain or India, Russia shall pledge herself not to entertain or support, without coming to an understanding with Great Britain, any proposal for a line in the neighbourhood of the Perso-Afghan border within the Russian or neutral sphere in Persia.
- (4) Russia shall support demands made by Great Britain of the Persian Gov[ernmen]t for concessions for the construction of the following branch lines connected with the proposed Trans-Persian Railway:—
(a.) from Mohammerah to Khorembad with a branch to a port to be constructed at Khor Musa: (b.) from Bander Abbas or Charbar *viâ* Regan and Bam to Kerman: (c.) from Bushire, *viâ* Aliabad to some point on a line—(d.) From Bander Abbas *viâ* Shiraz to Ahwaz.
- (5) The main line and those of the above branches which lie in the neutral sphere *i.e.*, (a), (c), and (d) shall be internationalised but the branch which lies entirely in the British sphere *i.e.*, (b) shall be a purely British project.
- (6) Absolute equality of treatment in all respects shall be guaranteed to British and British Indian trade passing over the line and its branches.

Y[our] E[xcellency] is at liberty frankly to explain to the Russian Gov[ernmen]t that the first three of the above conditions are dictated by strategic considerations and are inserted in the interest of India.

The enclosed copy of a letter from the India Office,⁽³⁾ taken in conjunction with that from the Board of Trade of the 18th September, 1910,⁽⁴⁾ which Y[our] E[xcellency] has already had an opportunity of perusing, will enable you to appreciate the reasons which have led H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] to the conclusion set forth above.

You could inform the Russian promoters of the general sense of the views of H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment]; while making it clear both to the Russian

⁽¹⁾ [Copies of this despatch were sent to the Director of Military Operations; to the India Office for concurrence.]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

⁽³⁾ [Not reproduced. It differs only in details of wording from the despatch given above.]

⁽⁴⁾ [Not reproduced. The letter enclosed a long memorandum on the commercial and financial aspect of the question. (F.O. 371/951. 33431/2901/10/34.)]

Gov[ernment]t and to the Russian promoters that H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] express no opinion as to the commercial or financial aspects of the question, which are matters to be examined by the syndicates who may desire to participate in the enterprise.

[I am, &c.]
F. G[REY].

No. 721.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

18299/48/11/44.

(No. 127.) Secret.

Sir,

St. Petersburg, D. May 11, 1911.

R. May 15, 1911.

In the course of a conversation which I had with the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs yesterday, I enquired whether the German Ambassador had, since his return from leave of absence made any communication to the Russian Government on the subject of the Russo-German negotiations.

Monsieur Nératow replied that Count Pourtalès had communicated to him certain observations which the German Government desired to make with regard to the revised text of the agreement, of which I had the honour to forward you a summary in my despatch No. 44, Secret, of the 21st February last.⁽²⁾ On my enquiring whether these observations were satisfactory, Monsieur Nératow said that some of them were acceptable but that others were not so; and he then proceeded to say that the chief objection raised by the German Government concerned the substitution in Article 2 of the term "Konieh-Bagdad Railway" for that of "Bagdad Railway," which had been used in the original draft. Count Pourtalès had contended that as arrangements had now been made for the construction and completion of the Konieh-Bagdad line within the next four or five years, it would not be of the least advantage to Germany were Russia to engage not to oppose the realisation of that line. Such an engagement must, if it was to carry any weight with the German Government, extend to the whole Bagdad Railway system, so as to include the Gulf section, whose construction had still to be provided for. Monsieur Nératow had on the other hand argued that the Russian Government had always understood that the engagement in question merely concerned the railway as far as Bagdad, as the question in discussion between the two Governments was the linking up of the Bagdad and north Persian railway systems by a line running from Sadijeh to Teheran *via* Khanikin. The Bagdad-Gulf section, he had asserted, had nothing whatever to do with this question, and had not entered into the purview of the negotiations.

Monsieur Nératow informed me that he had not yet submitted the matter to the Council of Ministers, and that before coming to a final decision he would consult you through the Russian Ambassador in London. He was in fact only waiting for a safe opportunity to write to Count Benckendorff, as he was so anxious that the Germans should not suspect him of discussing the question with you that he preferred not to trust such a communication to a cypher telegram. He was afraid, however, that the German Government would insist on the retention of the original wording—Bagdad Railway—and that if the Russian Government refused to yield on this point, the whole negotiations would break down. This would mean that Germany would regain her liberty of action in north Persia, and the first use which she would make of it would be to obtain a concession for the Khanikin-Teheran line.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet Committee.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 673-7, No. 699.]

I said that I knew that you were anxious that the present negotiations should be brought to a satisfactory conclusion, but that at the same time we should naturally prefer to see the words "Konieh-Bagdad Railway" retained in the text. I had always understood from what Monsieur Sazonow had told me that the German Government perfectly understood that the engagement which Russia was to take was restricted to the railway as far as Bagdad; but this did not now appear to be the case. I trusted, however, that if the Russian Government should find itself obliged, in order to prevent a breakdown of the negotiations, to give way to Germany on this important point, it would do so only on the understanding that no other concessions were to be expected from it.

I was unable to get Monsieur Nératow to say what were the observations submitted by the German Government which he regarded as unacceptable. He told me, however, that Germany had offered her financial participation in the Khanikin-Teheran railway, should the Russian Government desire it, and gave me to understand that some other formula would have to be found to record the engagements taken by Germany in the third article respecting the railways to the north of Khanikin; but he did not say whether he contemplated reverting to Monsieur Sazonow's idea of embodying these engagements in an exchange of notes.

There has been a temporary improvement in Monsieur Sazonow's condition during the past week, and His Excellency has doubtless been consulted by Monsieur Nératow with regard to the German answer to the Russian text of the agreement. I fear, however, that, whoever may be responsible for the conduct of the negotiations at present, Germany is pretty sure to get the better of the bargain.

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

MINUTES.

It was clear that the Germans would raise objections to the substitution of "Koniah-Bagdad" for "Bagdad," nor do I see, logically, what the Russians, having originally allowed the latter reading to appear in the agreement, can say in reply.

To insist on the alteration would probably cause the negotiations to break down altogether. Germany would then regain her freedom of action in northern Persia and M. Nératow fears that she would use it at once to obtain the concession for the Khanikin-Teheran line.

I cannot believe that it is impossible to avert this danger. We have already warned the Persians that they must not give such concessions as that and they certainly will be most anxious for an excuse not to do so. Backed by Great Britain and Russia, I cannot see why Persia should not resist the German demand.

It would however doubtless be better that the negotiations should not break down and, since the agreement between the Porte and the Bagdad Railway Co[mpany] the restoration of the word "Bagdad" to the text of the proposed Russo-German agreement in substitution for "Koniah-Bagdad" has surely less importance than it would have had.

We are not called on to give advice till the Russian Gov[ernment] ask for it but Count Benckendorff is to make a communication.

H. N.

May 16th, 1911.

R. P. M.

M. Cambon read to me yesterday (17th) some tel[egram]s recording M. Louis' impressions of the attitude likely to be assumed by M. Neratof in future Russo-German negotiations—and these impressions did not indicate that M. Louis anticipated a very stiff attitude on the part of Russia. M. Neratof, according to M. Louis, regarded the "Konieh-Bagdad section" or "Bagdad railway" as a mere "question de mots," and was quite prepared to cede to German requests on this point. We had better wait, before forming an opinion ourselves, till C[oun]t Benckendorff approaches us, which will presumably be early next week as he receives his bag on Sunday.

A. N.

This can be dealt with when Count Benckendorff brings it before me.⁽³⁾

The Russians will have to give way, but to make it clear in doing so that they are not thereby committed to agree to the increase of Turkish Customs dues. If I remember correctly

there is in their draft a proviso that the promise not to oppose was not to be construed as entailing upon them any obligation to make pecuniary sacrifices, and to prevent future trouble they should in conceding the point about "Bagdad railway" be explicit in stipulating that this does not bind them to increased Customs dues.

F. G.

No. 722.

Foreign Office to War Office.

Memorandum for the Chief of the Imperial General Staff.

F.O. 371/1176.

16485/1/11/34.

Sir,

Foreign Office, May 15, 1911.

Sir Edward Grey has had under his consideration Sir W. Nicholson's Memorandum of the 26th ultimo respecting the project for a Trans-Persian Railway.⁽¹⁾

Without wishing to dispute many of the arguments against the utility and advantage of the construction of such a line—so far as British interests are concerned—Sir Edward Grey is disposed to think that Sir W. Nicholson somewhat underrates the commercial value of a line debouching at Bunder Abbas, which has, for some time past, been recommended to Sir E. Grey by competent authorities as likely to give a great impetus to British trade with Persia.

He will also refrain from discussing the measures of defence which might become necessary if the line was built, as its construction has been approved by the Government of India. He would add, in this connexion, that the proposal to construct and garrison a fortress at some point on the coast section did not emanate from the Gov[ernmen]t of India but from the chief of the Indian General Staff, who made it in a separate note and that the suggestion was adopted neither by the Committee appointed to consider the question of the railway, of which that officer was a member, nor by the Gov[ernmen]t of India themselves of which the Commander-in-Chief is a member.⁽²⁾

The reasons which have weighed in the decision to inform the Russian Government that he is ready to refer the examination of this question to a "Comité d'Études" are the conviction that it will be impossible to resist indefinitely the construction of a Trans-Persian Railway and that, if constructed, it is highly important that it should follow an alignment which, with all its disadvantages, is that preferred by the Government of India to other possible routes.

It is possible that the project may not survive a minute investigation and that it may, for financial and economic reasons, be found to be impracticable but until the question has been thoroughly examined Sir E. Grey feels that he would not be justified in negating a scheme, which is strongly advocated by the Russian Government, and which, "primâ facie," would be to the advantage of Persia.

[I am, &c.

LOUIS MALLET.]

⁽¹⁾ [Not reproduced. It explained the reasons why railway construction in South Persia was regarded as of doubtful advantage. The tenour is sufficiently indicated by the reply from the Foreign Office. (F.O. 371/1176. 16485/1/11/34.) The reply was drafted in the first instance by Mr. Mallet in a minute on Sir W. Nicholson's memorandum. A subsequent minute by Sir Edward Grey shews that he then discussed it with Mr. Mallet. A new draft was prepared and shewn to Lord Morley whose suggested amendment was embodied in the final text.]

⁽²⁾ [This sentence was added at the suggestion of Lord Morley.]

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1176.
19356/1/11/34A.
(No. 134.) Secret.
Sir,

St. Petersburg, D. May 16, 1911.

R. May 22, 1911.

In accordance with the instructions conveyed to me in your despatch No. 129, Secret of the 10th instant,⁽²⁾ I yesterday communicated to the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs the conditions on which His Majesty's Government are willing to assent in principle to the proposed trans-Persian railway, and to agree to the initiation of negotiations between its promoters in St. Petersburg and London. I at the same time handed to His Excellency a memorandum embodying these conditions.

In the course of our conversation I explained to Monsieur Nératow that the first three conditions had been dictated by strategic considerations and had been inserted in the interest of India. Were the projected railway to be constructed India would, I said, have to sacrifice all the advantages of her present strategical isolation, with but little prospect of gaining any solid commercial advantages in return; and it was, therefore, necessary for us to see that her interests were safeguarded. A railway, moreover, that ran along the southern frontier of Afghanistan might be unfavourably viewed by the Amir and might tend to arouse a feeling of suspicion and ill-will in His Majesty's mind. I at the same time pointed out that, while Russian trade would undoubtedly profit very considerably from the projected railway, British trade would gain nothing without the branch lines enumerated in my memorandum. In consenting in principle to its construction we were, I added, mainly actuated by the desire of collaborating with Russia towards the realisation of a scheme in which she took so much interest.

Monsieur Nératow observed that he would have thought that, were the main line to be brought down to the coast at Bander Abbas as we now suggested, the branch lines to which I had referred might be dispensed with, but that he quite understood our general attitude. We must not, however, imagine that because the Russian group represented by Monsieur Khomiakoff and Monsieur Zweguintzoff were actively pushing this railway scheme, the Russian Government were definitely committed to it. All that they had done so far was to give their conditional assent to the formation of a "comité d'études," and he was himself rather sceptical as to whether this Committee would ever get a return for the money which they proposed to expend on the preliminary investigation.

I remarked that, though I was also not very optimistic on this point, I personally thought that the construction of a trans-Persian railway was a mere question of time, and that if this view was correct it would be preferable to construct it as soon as possible under Anglo-Russian auspices, so as to forestall the proposed Khanikin-Teheran line. His Excellency replied that he feared that this would be impossible, as the latter line would probably be commenced in some six years' time. The first problem that would have to be solved with regard to the trans-Persian railway was the question of its alignment, and though this was a matter which would have to be carefully gone into by the "comité d'études," the final decision must of course rest with the two Governments. The first and most essential condition was that it should provide Persia with the most rapid means of communication with Europe, and that it should thus be able to compete successfully with the Bagdad Railway. That Railway constituted the most direct route, and as it was, sooner or later, bound to be prolonged towards the Indian frontier *viâ* Khanikin and Ispahan, it was necessary that the alignment of the trans-Persian railway should be made still more

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to Lord Crewe; to Lord Morley; to the Cabinet Committee.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 697-8, No. 720.]

direct. On my remarking that we should have to bring pressure to bear at Teheran to prevent Germany obtaining a concession for a line from Khanikin to Ispahan through the neutral zone, Monsieur Nératow replied that we were more likely to attain this object by convincing the Persian Government of the commercial advantages offered by the railway in which we were interested than by exercising political pleasure.

I gather from what Monsieur Nératow subsequently told me that His Excellency is in favour of a line running along the eastern shore of the Black Sea from a point opposite Kertch, with which it could be connected by a tunnel, rather than of one from Baku to Enzeli. What however struck me most was His Excellency's lukewarmness with regard to the trans-Persian railway scheme, as well as the conviction with which he spoke of the extension of the Bagdad Railway across the neutral zone as a factor with which we should have to reckon.

Since seeing Monsieur Nératow I have communicated to Monsieur Khomiakoff and Monsieur Zweguintzoff, the principal promoters of the trans-Persian railway scheme, the general views of His Majesty's Government with regard to that project. I told them that His Majesty's Government were prepared to consent to it in principle on certain conditions, of which the chief ones were that the line should join the Indian railway system at Karachi instead of at Nushki; that there should be a break of gauge at Bander Abbas or at whatever point it might enter the British sphere of influence; that, as the main line would confer but little benefit on British trade, certain branch lines should be constructed from the coast; and that in the British sphere the line should be a purely British project.

Both Monsieur Khomiakoff and Monsieur Zweguintzoff expressed themselves as quite satisfied, remarking that they personally saw no objections to any of the above-named conditions, though they could not answer for their Government.

On my asking them what view they took as to the alignment of the proposed railway, they both of them expressed a preference for the original idea of a line starting from Baku, as they considered that the line suggested by Monsieur Nératow would be more difficult to construct. They also were strongly in favour of carrying the line from Teheran to Yezd *via* Kashan without passing by Ispahan, so as to leave a mountain range between it and that town, which is, in their opinion, within too easy reach of the Bagdad Railway. They both of them share Monsieur Nératow's view that Germany will, sooner or later attempt to procure an extension of that railway through the neutral zone, and consider that the surest way of rendering the realisation of such a project impossible and of striking a death-blow at the Teheran-Khanikin line, is to commence the construction of the trans-Persian railway with the least possible delay.

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

MINUTES.

M. Nératow is as sceptical as we are about the feasibility of the scheme and this being so I do not see why he thinks that a scheme for a similar railway across Persia from the Bagdad Railway would be so easy to accomplish.

Surely if Anglo-Russian influence in Persia is worth anything at all the two Powers could put enough pressure on the Persian Gov[ernmen]t to prevent them from granting any concession of the kind, besides which the Germans would not, so far as I can see, find it any easier than the Anglo-Russian group to obtain money for their purpose.

The Russian promoters are, naturally, more optimistic.

No further action on our part seems necessary. We can leave the two groups to start their negotiations.

H. N.

May 22, 1911.

R. P. M.

Monsieur Nératow's attitude is difficult to appreciate. If he is sceptical about the Anglo-Russian line and convinced that the Bagdad line will be prolonged "to the Indian frontier" and as we are all going to participate in the Bagdad line and must therefore wish it to be a

successful enterprize, perhaps a solution will ultimately be found in an understanding with Germany for the continuation of the Bagdad line to Karachi *via Bunder Abbas*. We could not consent to any other alignment, as every strategical argument against the present scheme would be of twofold force against the continuation of the Bagdad railway to India.

Perhaps Sir G. Buchanan might be told privately that we are not keen on the Trans-Persian line and that the terms of our reply have been dictated chiefly by a desire to meet the supposed Russian wishes in the matter but that whatever be the eventual solution, it would strengthen the position of the British and Russian Gov[ernmen]ts, if a concession were obtained from the Persian Gov[ernmen]t or if a promise were obtained from them not to give a concession to any other Power for a similar line.

L. M.

I think we should leave this question alone for the moment—and let the 2 groups, whenever ours is formed, discuss matters between themselves. We have on our hands the Mohammerah line and the Bagdad railway and to my mind we should concentrate on these two projects. They are of more immediate importance.

A. N.
E. G.

No. 724.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir A. Nicolson.⁽¹⁾

Private.⁽²⁾

My dear Nicolson,

St. Petersburg, May 17, 1911.

Many thanks for your last letter.⁽³⁾

The chief event of the past fortnight has been the resumption of the Russo-German negotiations; and you will have already learnt by a despatch which I sent last week that the Germans are jibbing at the substitution of the term "Konieh-Bagdad" for that of the "Bagdad" Railway.⁽⁴⁾ I was always afraid that they would never accept this alteration in the original text, in spite of the assurance which poor Sazonow so often gave me that they perfectly understood that the engagement into which Russia was entering had only reference to the railway as far as Bagdad. Now that we have also embarked on separate negotiations with Germany,⁽⁵⁾ I suppose that the withdrawal of Russia's opposition to the realisation of the whole Bagdad Railway scheme is not a matter of such material importance to us. I cannot however help feeling sorry that Germany should obtain the moral and diplomatic satisfaction of imposing such a condition on Russia and that we have been unable to prevent it. Though Pourtalès is negotiating with Nératow, Sazonow is I believe directing the negotiations from his sick room, and in his present state of health he will be more inclined than ever to yield to German pressure. Nératow is the reverse of communicative; and I could not get him to tell me anything very precise about the other points under discussion. He may perhaps have written more in detail to Benckendorff, and in that case you will be in a better position to form an opinion on the whole question than I am.

I communicated to Nératow on Monday the conditions on which His Majesty's Government are prepared to consent in principle to the trans-Persian railway.⁽⁶⁾ He made no objections beyond saying that he thought that, were the railway to be brought down to Bandar Abbas, the branch lines we were asking for would be hardly

(1) [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Morley. The endorsement is initialled by Sir Edward Grey.]

(2) [Carnock MSS., Vol. II of 1911.]

(3) [The reference is to Sir A. Nicolson's letter of April 26, 1911. It mentioned the Bagdad and trans-Persian Railway, but was concerned mainly with Turkish affairs. It adds nothing of importance to information given elsewhere. Carnock MSS., Vol. II of 1911.]

(4) [r. *supra*, pp. 698-9, No. 721.]

(5) [For this subject, v. *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. VI, pp. 577-665, Chapter XLVIII, *passim*.]

(6) [v. *supra*, pp. 697-8, No. 720.]

necessary, as our trade interests would in that case be sufficiently safeguarded. He quite understood our attitude towards the scheme in general, but said that we must not imagine that because the group represented by Khomiakoff and Zwegintzoff were actively pushing it, the Russian Government was definitely committed to it. All that they had done was to give a conditional assent to the formation of a "comité d'études." He spoke with considerable scepticism and lukewarmness about the whole scheme, but remarked that if the railway was to be built it must offer Persia a more direct means of communication with Europe than the Bagdad Railway, or else it would not be able to compete with the latter railway. He suggested as an alternative to the Baku-Enzeli route a line starting from a point opposite Kertch and running along the eastern shore of the Black Sea. The conviction with which he spoke of the eventual extension of the Bagdad Railway through the neutral zone to Ispahan as a factor with which we would have to count gave me the rather disagreeable impression that Pourtales may have broached the subject to him. On my remarking that we should have to bring pressure to bear at Teheran to prevent Germany acquiring the concession for a railway from Khanikin to Ispahan, he said that we should attain this object better if we were in a position to offer Persia a more direct line of railway ourselves.

I had a conversation with Khomiakoff and Zwegintzoff this morning, and they both seemed quite satisfied with what I told them of the nature of our answer. They both consider the Baku-Enzeli route preferable to the alternative route suggested by Nératow, and both think—and in this I rather agree with them—that the railway should be carried from Teheran to Kashan and Yezd without passing by Ispahan. That town, they think, is in too easy reach of the Bagdad Railway, and it would therefore be more prudent to leave a chain of mountains between it and the trans-Persian railway. Nératow will, I imagine, discuss our reply with them before giving me the answer of the Russian Government. . . .⁽⁷⁾

Ever yours,

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

(7) [The rest of the letter refers to Morocco, troubles in the Duma and M. Sazonov's health.]

No. 725.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.

F.O. 871/1287.

18299/48/11/44.

Tel. (No. 195.)

Foreign Office, May 23, 1911, 6.15 p.m.

Your despatch No. 127 Secret.⁽¹⁾

I have pointed out to Russian Ambassador that original understanding was that Russia, France and ourselves though negotiating separately would not finally conclude an arrangement about Bagdad Railway till all three parties were satisfied. M. Sazonow contended that as arrangement come to at Potsdam did not include railway beyond Bagdad it was not a breach of this understanding. It is very disappointing that this point on which M. Sazonow laid so much stress should disappear.

But essential point is that Russia should not be bound to agree to increase of Turkish Customs. If this is made clear beyond dispute I should not press the definition of the railway to point of breaking off Russian negotiations with Germany.

It would however be fatal to future co-operation of Russia, France and ourselves in this question if Germany were left free to contend that by Potsdam agreement Russia had deprived herself of this right to object to increase of Turkish Customs dues. There should be no ambiguity between Russia and Germany about this.

(1) [*v. supra*, pp. 698-9, No. 721.]

No. 726.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

19978/48/11/44.

Tel. (No. 115.) Secret.

St. Petersburg, May 24, 1911.

D. 8.15 P.M.

R. 9.30 P.M.

Your telegram No. 195.⁽²⁾

I repeated to Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs to-day what you had said to Russian Ambassador, who has not yet reported conversation.

His Excellency admitted strength of your arguments in favour of the retention of the term "Konieh-Bagdad Railway," but did not commit himself one way or the other. He assured me that you need be under no apprehension in regard to 4 per cent customs increase. Russia has reserved full liberty of action on this point, and in order to make this quite clear it had been stated in the first article of the agreement that no pecuniary or economic sacrifice was to be required of Russia.

(¹) [This telegram is endorsed as having been sent to the King.]

(²) [r. immediately preceding document.]

No. 727.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

20948/48/11/44.

(No. 188.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, May 29, 1911.

I told M. Cambon to-day that I had impressed upon the Russian Government through Sir George Buchanan how essential it was that Russian liberty of action should be maintained in connection with the increase of Turkish Customs Dues, and that there should be no misunderstanding on the part of Germany of what Russia intended when the Agreement begun at Potsdam was concluded.

M. Cambon agreed that this was an essential point, and that if Russia yielded on this all co-operation between the three Powers was at an end.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

(¹) [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet Committee.]

No. 728.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

21691/48/11/44.

(No. 159.) Secret.

Sir,

St. Petersburg, May 31, 1911.

In a conversation which I had with the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs on the 24th of this month, I enquired whether His Excellency had received a report of the conversation which you had had with the Russian Ambassador on the subject of the Russo-German negotiations, and, on his replying in the negative, I informed

(¹) [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe.]

[8959]

him of the language which you had held to Count Benckendorff as reported in your telegram No. 195 of the 23rd instant.⁽²⁾

M. Neratow did not attempt to dispute the justice of your contentions and admitted the desirability of retaining the term "Konich-Bagdad," provided that this could be done without bringing about a rupture of the negotiations. He was careful, however, not to commit himself either one way or the other, as he had not yet had an opportunity of discussing the question with the President of the Council. As regarded however the question of the 4% Customs increase, he begged me to assure you that you need not be under the slightest apprehension. Russia had, he said, reserved to herself complete liberty of action on this point and the language of the Draft Agreement made this perfectly clear. It was, indeed, for this very reason that words had been introduced into it to the effect that no pecuniary or economic sacrifice was to be required of Russia.

I returned to the subject in a conversation which I had with M. Neratow this afternoon after receiving your telegram No. 206 of the 25th instant.⁽³⁾ I reminded His Excellency that the term "Bagdad Railway," employed in the original Draft Agreement, had been interpreted in two diametrically opposite senses by the German and Russian Governments. It was therefore most important to prevent any similar misunderstanding arising in the future respecting Russia's position with regard to the question of the 4% Customs Increase. This might be done either by altering the words to which he had called my attention so as to make their meaning perfectly clear or by obtaining some precise assurance from the German Government to show that they understood these words to convey the same meaning which the Russian Government attached to them.

M. Neratow replied by assuring me once more that the question of the 4% Customs Increase had never been raised in the course of the negotiations; that Russia was perfectly free to give or to refuse her consent to it; that Germany could never dispute her right to act as she pleased with regard to this question; that the meaning of the words in question was perfectly clear; and that their scope would be restricted were they to be made to refer expressly to the 4% Customs Increase.

His Excellency then observed that, while Russia was thus perfectly free to refuse the proposed increase in the Customs, it would be difficult for her, were she ever to consent to it, to make her acceptance conditional on the non-application of the revenue to be derived from it to the Bagdad Railway. I said that I thought that, as we had a few years ago consented to an increase of 3% in the Turkish Customs on the condition that the proceeds should be devoted to Macedonia, we might, if we so wished it, make our consent to any further increase conditional on the proceeds not being used for the purpose of kilometric guarantees. His Excellency, however, maintained that, while it was possible to grant a Customs Increase for one specific object, we could not reverse this process and prescribe the purposes to which it was not to be applied.

I gather from what M. Neratow said that he was under the impression that we may wish to attach some such condition to our eventual consent to the 4% Customs Increase and that he wishes to warn us that it would be difficult for the Russian Government to follow us in such a course. He subsequently informed me that he had had no further conversations with the German Ambassador on the subject of the Draft Agreement, but that the negotiations might be resumed in two or three weeks' time when the President of the Council would have been relieved of his parliamentary work by the prorogation of the Council of the Empire.

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 704, No. 725.]

⁽³⁾ [Not reproduced. Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 206) of May 25, D. 3.40 P.M., informed Sir G. Buchanan that the important point was that Russia and Germany should interpret the Draft Agreement in the same sense. (F.O. 371/1237. 19978/48/11/44.)]

MINUTES.

It will not be of much use to press M. Nératow further for the present.
Approve Sir G. Buchanan's language ⁽¹⁾

H. N.
June 7, 1911
R. P. M.
L. M.
A. N.

When we do give our consent to the 4% increase of Customs it will be because we have got conditions about Bagdad R[ailwa]y and Persian Gulf, which make it unnecessary for us to oppose the application of Customs Revenue to the R[ailwa]y.

E. G.

⁽⁴⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's despatch (No. 165) of June 17, 1911, approved Sir G. Buchanan's language. (F.O. 371/1237. 21691/48/11/44.)]

No. 729.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.

Private.⁽¹⁾

My dear Bertie,

June 1, 1911.

. . . .⁽²⁾ So far as I know, the chief point in dispute about the Potsdam negotiations is the meaning to be attached to the term "Bagdad Railway." But, as I have pointed out in conversation with Benckendorff, the essential thing is that Russia should retain her liberty to refuse her consent to the increase of Turkish Customs Dues. As long as she does that, she is in a position to support us and France when we need her support. In any case, refusal to agree to the increase of Customs Dues is the only means she has of opposing the Bagdad Railway; whether it goes to Bagdad, or Bussorah, or Koweit.

Yours sincerely,

E. GREY.

⁽¹⁾ [Grey MSS., Vol. 13.]

⁽²⁾ [The first paragraph of this letter refers to Balkan questions, but adds nothing of importance to information on this subject given in *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (I).]

No. 730.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

22277/48/11/44.

(No. 165.) Secret.

Sir,

St. Petersburg, D. June 4, 1911.

R. June 8, 1911.

I asked the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs this afternoon whether there was any progress to report in the matter of the Russo-German negotiations, and whether I might inform you that he would not definitely conclude them without again consulting you.

Monsieur Nératow replied that he had already submitted to you the only point of any real importance, namely, that with regard to the retention or abandonment of the term "Konieh-Bagdad Railway." He had had no further conversations with

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe.]

Count Pourtalès since he had last seen me; and it was his intention not to commit himself with regard to this particular point till the very last, and then to see whether it was possible to retain the word "Konieh" without causing a rupture of the negotiations. He thought that the negotiations would probably last for another two or three months.

On my pressing him to speak of the other articles of the draft agreement, Monsieur Nératow told me that Count Pourtalès had proposed that as the Railway would reach Bagdad in five or six years' time and as the branch line from Sadijeh to Khanikin would be completed in another two, Russia should engage to construct and finish the Khanikin-Teheran line in two years from the completion of the Sadijeh-Khanikin line, or in ten years from now. This, Monsieur Nératow said, Russia could not undertake to do, as, in view of the mountainous country through which it would have to pass it would be impossible to construct it in so short a period as two years. As regards the financing of the line, Monsieur Nératow is apparently in favour of an international syndicate—and the text will probably be modified so as to recognise the right of Russia to invite the participation of foreign capital. His Excellency also seems anxious to keep Germany out of such a syndicate.

Monsieur Nératow said that it would probably be necessary to tone down the text of the article dealing with railways running towards the Russian and Persian frontiers, so as not to offend the susceptibilities of the Porte. The wording of the article would be rendered somewhat vaguer, but in order to prevent any possible misunderstanding, its real meaning might be explained by an exchange of secret notes.

I suggested that this same procedure might be followed with regard to the words "financial and economic sacrifices," so as to render it quite clear that they conferred on Russia the right to refuse her consent to the four per cent. Customs increase. Monsieur Nératow, however, declared that this was quite unnecessary, and that any mention of the four per cent. Customs increase in connexion with them would only restrict their scope.

In the course of our conversation Monsieur Nératow informed me that some of the members of the Russian group interested in the trans-Persian railway would shortly visit London, and enquired whether His Majesty's Government had attached any conditions as to the English financiers with whom they might negotiate. I replied that, so far as I was aware, they were free to negotiate with whatever group of English financiers they pleased, but I presumed that the results of their negotiations would have eventually to be approved by His Majesty's Government.⁽²⁾

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

⁽²⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's despatch (No. 166) to Mr. O'Beirne of June 17, 1911, approved Sir G. Buchanan's language. (F.O. 371/1237. 22277/48/11/44.)]

No. 731.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

25700/48/11/34.

(No. 180.) Secret.

Sir,

St. Petersburg, D. June 27, 1911.

R. July 3, 1911.

I asked the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs yesterday whether he could tell me anything to report to you regarding the progress of his pending negotiations with Germany. He said that he had asked Count Benckendorff to speak to you

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King; and as having been seen at Berlin.]

regarding the clause concerning the Khanikin-Tehran railway. He was in doubt whether it was necessary to insert in that clause a provision to meet the case of neither Russian, French nor British capital being forthcoming in sufficient amount for the eventual construction of the line. At any rate, he thought that we ought in good time to consider the question of how the capital was to be provided and of "guarantees" for the interest.

I said that I thought, when the question had been discussed before, it had been agreed that it would be sufficient to have a clause providing that Russia would undertake the construction of the line and reserved to herself the right to bring in foreign capital. If when the time came the capital was not forthcoming, it would be early enough to think of the communication which would have to be made to Germany.

Monsieur Nératow replied that if the clause were drafted in the way suggested, and if Russia when the time came could not procure sufficient capital for the construction of the line, Russia would have failed to carry out her undertaking and the other clauses of the agreement would fall through. It might be better to add a provision giving Russia liberty to renounce the right of building the line if she chose to do so.

I have, &c.

HUGH O'BEIRNE.

MINUTE.

If Russia renounces the right to build the line she cannot object to its being built by Germany, but probably the latter would find as much difficulty as the former in obtaining the necessary capital.

H N
July 4, 1911.
L M.
R P. M.
A N.
E G.

No. 732.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1176.

25701/1/11/34A.

(No. 181.) Secret.

Sir,

St. Petersburg, D. June 28, 1911.

R. July 3, 1911.

I asked the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs on the 26th instant whether we might soon expect an answer to the *aide-mémoire* from His Majesty's Embassy of May 2nd/15 last, stating the conditions on which His Majesty's Government would be prepared to assent in principle to the scheme for the construction of a trans-Persian Railway to connect with the Indian railway system.⁽²⁾ Monsieur Nératow said that he had not intended to return any reply to Sir G. Buchanan's communication. It would be time enough to go into the detailed questions raised by these conditions when the proposed "société d'Etudes" had completed its task and we had fuller information in our possession. When dealing with the conditions laid down by Great Britain the Russian Government would probably put forward conditions of their own, and this would involve lengthy negotiations. For the present, it was sufficient that the two Governments should have signified their assent to the general principle of a trans-Persian line.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet Committee; and as having been seen at Berlin.]

⁽²⁾ [This *aide-mémoire* embodied the substance of Sir Edward Grey's despatch (No. 129) of May 10, 1911, *v. supra*, pp. 697-8, No. 720. *cp* also *supra*, pp. 701-2, No. 723.]

I said that I understood that some of the Russian promoters of the scheme were shortly going to London with the object of associating themselves with a group of English capitalists who would join in finding the money for a survey of the proposed route. I thought that before subscribing the necessary funds the capitalists would like to know that the two Governments had definitely assented to the scheme of a trans-Persian line. Suppose that after the surveys had been carried out Russia declined to agree to one of the conditions put forward by His Majesty's Government, and the latter could not give their assent to the principle of the line. The capitalists concerned would rightly feel aggrieved.

Monsieur Nératow replied that he had carefully explained to Monsieur Khomiakoff that the Russian Government was merely agreeing in a general way to the idea of a trans-Persian line, but that it did not follow that on further examination difficulties might not arise to prevent Russia from agreeing to the actual execution of the project.

I venture to think that it would be desirable that you should furnish His Majesty's Embassy with instructions as to the necessity of a reply being returned by the Russian Government to the Embassy's last communication.

I have, &c.

HUGH O'BEIRNE.

MINUTES.

I must say that I rather agree with M. Nératow that the *société d'études* should be allowed to complete its work before the two Gov[ernmen]ts negotiate details. We need not await the actual survey before beginning negotiations, but merely the report of the *société*. If, for instance, (as is possible) the *société* decide that the scheme is impracticable and that it is not worth while to make the survey, it will be unnecessary to negotiate at all.

This might be pointed out to Sir G. Buchanan.

H. N.

July 4, 1911.

I agree.

R. P. M.

It does not seem necessary to press for a reply.

L. M.

I agree.

A. N.

We are committed only in the same way as the Russian Gov[ernmen]t and are entitled to make the same reserve as that made by M. Nératow in the penultimate paragraph of this despatch. The Russian Gov[ernmen]t reserves the right to make conditions before agreeing to the actual execution of the project, we of course retain the right to insist upon the conditions that we have made, and if Russia introduces new conditions later on we might have to do the same.

E. G.

No. 733.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

27839/48/11/44.

(No. 201.) Secret.

Sir,

St. Petersburg, D. July 12, 1911.

R. July 17, 1911.

As I have already had the honour to inform you by telegraph,⁽²⁾ the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs yesterday read to me the amended text of the Russo-German agreement, which His Excellency proposes to hand to the German Ambassador on Friday.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King.]

⁽²⁾ [Sir G. Buchanan's telegram (No. 150), D. July 11, 1911, 11.40 p.m., R. July 12, noon, is not reproduced as the information is given more fully in the above despatch. (F.O. 371/1237. 27323/48/11/44.)]

It consists, like the revised draft drawn up by Monsieur Sazonow, on which I reported in my despatch No. 44, Secret, of February 21st⁽³⁾ last, of a preamble and four articles; and the following is, to the best of my recollection, a summary of its essential points:—

The preamble records the principle of commercial equality, recognises Russia's special political interests in Persia, and ascribes a purely commercial character to the interests of Germany.

Article 1. Germany declares that she will not seek for concessions for railways, telegraphs, and roads to the north of a line drawn from Kasri Shirin and passing by Ispahan, Yezd and Kakhk to the Afghan frontier at the latitude of Ghazik.

Article 2 is to the following effect:—

The Russian Government, having the intention of securing from the Government of the Shah the concession for the construction of a system of railways in the north of Persia, engages to obtain simultaneously a concession for a linking-up line for the Sadijeh-Khanikin line; to commence its construction within two years of the day on which that branch of the Konieh-Bagdad Railway shall have been completed; and to complete the said construction within a further term of four years. The Russian Government is free to fix the *tracé* of this linking-up line, while taking into consideration any desiderata which Germany may put forward, and both Governments agree that there are to be no differential rates on either of the two lines. In the event of Russia being unable or unwilling to commence the construction of the line within the prescribed term of two years, she reserves the right of renouncing the concession.

Article 3. Russia engages not to oppose the realisation of the *Bagdad* Railway nor to place obstacles in the way of the participation of foreign capital; but no pecuniary nor economic sacrifices are to be demanded of her.

Germany engages to take no decision with regard to the construction of railways in the zone situated between the Bagdad line and the Russian and Persian frontiers to the north of Khanikin without a previous understanding with Russia.

Article 4 is virtually explanatory of the concluding sentence of Article 2.

In the event of her renouncing the concession, Russia reserves the right to cede it to a foreign financial syndicate; to participate in the enterprise to the extent which she may desire; to enjoy all the same privileges as the constructor or the most favoured nation; and to have the right to purchase the line when completed at cost price.

The principal concessions made to Germany by Monsieur Nératow are the omission of the word "Konieh" before "Bagdad Railway" in the third article and the toning down of the engagements taken by Germany with reference to the railways to the north of Khanikin. On the other hand Monsieur Nératow has modified the articles dealing with the Teheran-Khanikin line in a sense which is certainly favourable to Russia, as Germany was demanding that its construction should be completed within two years from the date of the line from Sadijeh reaching Khanikin. If His Excellency adheres to his decision to inform the German Ambassador that his consent to the omission of the word "Konieh" is conditional on the acceptance by Germany of the rest of the agreement, and if Germany consents to this, Monsieur Nératow will I think have good reason to be satisfied with this arrangement from the Russian point of view.

I confined myself to expressing the hope that the agreement had now attained its final shape and that he would not listen to any fresh demands on Germany's

(³) [*v. supra*, pp. 673-7, No. 699.]

part. His Excellency replied that Germany would probably raise objections to the terms of the 2nd and 4th articles, as she would no doubt be anxious to obtain the reversion of the concession for the line from Khanikin to the north. He gave me however to understand that he would not consent to any but verbal alterations.

On my thanking His Excellency for his courteous communication and on my wishing him every success in bringing the negotiations to a speedy termination, Monsieur Nératow enquired whether I saw any particular advantage in the agreement being signed without further delay. I replied that it seemed to me that the conversations had lasted quite long enough and that the signature of the agreement in its present form would, I should have thought, be a considerable relief to the Russian Government. Monsieur Nératow, however, appeared to be quite indifferent as to whether the negotiations were prolonged or not; and his indifference may perhaps be explained by the difficulties with which the Russian Government will be confronted when the time comes for securing the capital required for the construction of the Khanikin-Teheran railway.

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

No. 784.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.

F.O. 371/1237.

27323/48/11/44.

Tel. (No. 335.)

Foreign Office, July 13, 1911, 8 A.M.

Your tel[egram] No. 150 (of July 12,⁽¹⁾ Russo-German agreement).

You should remind Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] that Article III is now at variance with the categorical assurance given by M. Sazonow that agreement did not apply to line south of Bagdad, but say that we do not press this point provided it is clearly understood that Russian freedom of action respecting increase of Customs dues is not prejudiced.⁽²⁾ It does not appear that this point has been made clear to Germany and if it has not she may embarrass future negotiations by raising it.

⁽¹⁾ [v. immediately preceding document, and note ⁽²⁾.]

⁽²⁾ [cp. *supra*, pp. 705-6, No 728; and *infra*, immediately succeeding document.]

No. 735.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

29928/48/11/44.

(No. 205.) Secret.

Sir,

St. Petersburg, D. July 14, 1911.

R. July 31, 1911.

Having failed to find the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs at home on the receipt of your telegram No. 335 of the 13th instant,⁽²⁾ I at once addressed an urgent private letter to His Excellency reminding him of the categorical assurances which Monsieur Sazonow had given me with regard to the meaning of the term "Bagdad Railway" and urging on him the necessity of explaining clearly to the German Ambassador that under Article III of the Draft Agreement Russia was

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe; and as having been seen at Berlin.]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

taking no engagement which could in any way hamper her liberty of action as regarded the proposed 4% increase in the Turkish Customs.

On calling on His Excellency by appointment this afternoon I was informed by Monsieur Nératow that he had just handed the amended text of the Agreement to the German Ambassador.⁽³⁾ In doing so he had called Count Pourtalès's attention to the words "sacrifices pécuniaires et économiques" and had explained to him quite clearly that Russia was taking no engagement whatsoever on the question of the 4% Customs Increase. He had further informed His Excellency that he reserved to himself the right to attach to the term "Bagdad Railway" the interpretation which Russia had placed on it, namely the railway as far as Bagdad. This, he had said, was to the best of his belief, the sense in which Monsieur Sazonow had always interpreted it during the Potsdam conversations; and he would therefore have to assure himself of what had really been in Monsieur Sazonow's "pensée" with regard to it before the moment came for attaching his signature to the Agreement.

I had so often in previous conversations pressed Monsieur Nératow respecting these two points without obtaining any definite promise from him that I was agreeably surprised to find that he had held this language to the German Ambassador. I do not, however, think that there is any likelihood of Germany consenting to sign the agreement if Russia merely engages not to oppose the construction of the railway as far as Bagdad. Such an engagement would not, under present circumstances, be of the slightest value to Germany, and if, therefore, Monsieur Nératow insists on adhering to his interpretation of the term "Bagdad Railway," the negotiations are almost certain to break down. In spite of the categorical assurances, which Monsieur Sazonow repeatedly gave me, that the conversations at Potsdam had only dealt with the Konieh-Bagdad Line, His Excellency must, I think, have been entrapped into saying something which gave Germany good grounds for asserting that he had undertaken to withdraw Russia's opposition to the whole railway down to the Gulf. When, after the publication of the Draft Agreement in the "Evening Times,"⁽⁴⁾ Monsieur Sazonow informed me that it would in consequence be necessary to remodel the entire draft, I observed that such a revision of the text would afford him the desired opportunity of modifying the term "Bagdad Railway" so as to render the meaning perfectly clear. He, however, at once replied that this was impossible, as Germany would never consent to it. It is, therefore, very doubtful whether Monsieur Nératow will be more successful in overcoming Germany's opposition to such a change in the text.

The question thus arises whether Monsieur Nératow is prepared to risk a rupture of the negotiations in order to carry this point. I hardly think so, though he might be prepared to go to greater lengths than Monsieur Sazonow if he has really a free hand in the matter, and for two reasons:—

In the first place he has not the same pressing reasons for wishing to bring the negotiations to a successful termination. He was not responsible for initiating the Potsdam conversations nor for the pæans raised by the Russian press when Monsieur Sazonow returned from Berlin with the fruits of what he imagined was a great diplomatic success. With Monsieur Sazonow the signature of the Agreement in some form or another was a question of "amour-propre," as his reputation as a diplomatist was at stake. This is not the case with Monsieur Nératow.

In the second place I have noticed, since I returned to St. Petersburg, that Monsieur Nératow speaks of the eventual termination of the negotiations with a tone of perfect indifference. He does not seem to care if they are indefinitely prolonged or if they are brought to a speedy conclusion; and I cannot help feeling that the manner in which Germany has intervened in the Moroccan question, despite the arrangement with France in 1909,⁽⁵⁾ has been an object lesson to him. The value

(3) [*cp. supra*, pp. 710-2, No. 733.]

(4) [*v. supra*, pp. 601-3, No. 638.]

(5) [*cp. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. VII, pp. 131-46, Chapter LI, section IV, *passim*; p. 830. *App. IV.*]

of an understanding with Germany has, I think, much depreciated in his eyes. His language to me, though reserved, leaves but little doubt as to what he thinks of the methods of German diplomacy. In speaking to me yesterday of the negotiations at present proceeding between France and Germany, His Excellency remarked that the Agadir incident would probably be closed by Germany receiving compensation somewhere else than in Morocco. He added, however, that he entirely failed to see any justification for Germany's claim to compensation.

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

No. 736.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.

F.O. 371/1176.

25701/1/11/34A.

(No. 192.) Secret.

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 19, 1911.

I have received Mr. O'Beirne's desp[atch] No. 181 secret of the 28th ult[imo],⁽¹⁾ relative to the proposed Trans-Persian Railway.

With regard to the suggestion contained in this despatch, that H[is] M[ajesty's] Embassy should receive instructions to represent to the Russian Gov[ernmen]t the necessity of returning a reply to Y[our] E[xc]cellency's communication of May 15th last,⁽²⁾ stating the conditions on which H[is] M[ajesty's] Government would be prepared to assent to the scheme in principle, I have to observe that H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnmen]t are committed to the project only in the same degree as the Russian Gov[ernmen]t and are entitled to make the same reserve as that formulated by the Russian Acting M[inister] for F[oreign] A[ffairs] as reported in the penultimate paragraph of the despatch.

M. Nératow reserves to the Russian Gov[ernmen]t the right to make conditions before agreeing to the actual execution of the project while H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnmen]t of course retain the right to make their agreement depend upon the fulfilment of the conditions which they have already made, and must be free to revise their conditions should Russia make new conditions that alter the nature of the project.

M. Nératow proposes to await the completion of the task undertaken by the *société d'études* before proceeding to negotiation on questions of detail, and I do not consider it necessary that Y[our] E[xc]cellency should press the Russian Gov[ernmen]t for a reply to the communication referred to till the Société d'Études has made its report upon the general practicability of the scheme.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

⁽¹⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 709-10, No. 732.]

⁽²⁾ [This communication embodied the substance of Sir Edward Grey's despatch (No. 129) of May 10, 1911, v. *supra*, pp. 697-8, No. 720. cp. also *supra*, pp. 701-2, No. 723.]

Note communicated by M. Sevastopulo, July 20, 1911.

F.O. 371/1176.

28518/1/11/34.

Nous n'avons pas d'objections au choix de Karachi comme terminus du chemin de fer Indo-Européen.

Mais nous sommes d'avis que pour l'entrée de la ligne dans la sphère Anglaise il y aurait lieu de faire choix d'un point autre que Bender-Abbas, tant à cause de l'allongement considérable que devrait subir la ligne pour passer par ce port, qu'à cause de l'accueil défavorable que ne manquerait pas de rencontrer cette voie auprès de nos cercles industriels et commerciaux; de plus, la voie de Bender-Abbas présenterait le grave inconvénient de rapprocher la ligne projetée du rayon Allemand du chemin de fer de Bagdad.

Nous réservons pour un examen ultérieur les autres points du mémorandum Anglais.⁽¹⁾

*Ambassade Impériale de Russie, Londres,
le 20 juillet, 1911.*

⁽¹⁾ [v. immediately preceding document, note ⁽²⁾.]

Note communicated to M. Sevastopulo.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1176.

28518/1/11/34.

Foreign Office, July 26, 1911.

H[is] M[ajesty's] P[rincipal] S[ecretary] of S[tate] for F[oreign] A[ffairs] has had the honour to receive the communication left at this Office by the 1st Sec[re-tary] of the Russian Embassy on the 20th inst[ant],⁽²⁾ proposing a change of the alignment adopted by H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] for the projected Trans-Persian Railway.

Sir E. Grey has the honour to inform M. Sevastopulo in reply that the proposed alignment was decided on only after careful consideration of the question by the Gov[ernmen]t of India and all the interested Dep[artmen]ts of H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment], and that the whole matter will have to be re-examined by the same authorities before an answer can be returned to the proposal of the Russian Gov[ernmen]t.

⁽¹⁾ [A copy of this note was sent to the India Office.]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document]

No. 739.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

St. Petersburg, August 10, 1911.

31561/48/11/44.

D. 8.20 P.M.

Tel. (No. 179.) Secret.

R. 11 P.M.

My despatch No. 201.⁽²⁾

German Ambassador, who returned from Berlin last night, has informed Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs that his Government accepts the amended text of the Russo-German agreement.⁽³⁾

Only modification to be introduced into it has reference to article 4; and a fifth article will probably be added to the effect that if at the expiry of two years from the time when the line from Sadijeh reaches Khanikin Russian Government informs the German Government that they renounce idea of constructing the Khanikin-Tehran line either by themselves or through a foreign financial syndicate, then Germany will be entitled to obtain concession from the Persian Government.

German Ambassador told Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs that his Government fully recognised Russia's liberty of action with regard to 4 per cent. customs increase, but that they could not admit term "Bagdad Railway" could apply to anything but the whole railway, as this was the interpretation which they had always understood it to bear.

On my asking Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs whether he would still adhere to the reserve which he had made verbally on this point, his Excellency said that interpretation was still left doubtful, but that it was not really a matter of great importance now that Germany recognised Russia's right to refuse her consent to the 4 per cent. increase.

I gather that his Excellency will not insist further and that agreement will be signed shortly. He has promised to communicate to me (? text) before signature.

MINUTE.

There is nothing more to be done and things might have been much worse.

H. N.

Aug[ust] 11, 1911

L. M.

E. G.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram is endorsed as having been sent to the King.]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 710-2, No 733.]

⁽³⁾ [The Agreement was signed on August 19, 1911. For the text v. *infra*, pp. 719-20, No. 741, *encl.*]

No. 740.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

St. Petersburg, August 19, 1911.

32796/48/11/44.

D. 8.5 P.M.

Tel. (No. 186.) Secret.

R. 10.15 P.M.

My telegram No. 183 (of August 18).⁽²⁾

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs informed me today that Germany had given categorical verbal assurance that she would construct no railways to the north of

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram is endorsed as having been sent to the King.]

⁽²⁾ [Sir G. Buchanan's telegram (No. 183) of August 18, D. 8.28 P.M., R. 10 P.M., is not reproduced. It gave some further modifications of the text of the Russo-German Agreement and stated that signature would take place on August 19, and that Sir G. Buchanan had received a copy of the text. (F.O. 371/1237. 32648/48/11/44.)]

Khanikin except those which she had the right to construct under the Bagdad Railway concession.

On my remarking that Diarbekir-Kharput Railway was the only one that she could in that case claim to construct, he said that her right to construct one from Mosul to Ardebil as well as a short line from Diala has been admitted. Military authorities had waived their objections to them, and as it was a matter which only interested Russia and which would give satisfaction to German *amour-propre*, Russian Government had not insisted.

I remarked that I thought that they had already done sufficient in this direction by engaging not to oppose whole Bagdad Railway scheme, and that it would in any case have been better to have insisted on written assurance. His Excellency replied that even written engagements were not always kept, and that, as Russia had not undertaken to facilitate in any way constructions of Gulf section by Germany, she could still co-operate with us as regards that section so long as we did not actively oppose its construction.

He added that, simultaneously with publication of agreement tomorrow, article would appear in the semi-official "Rossia" with reference to 4 per cent. customs increase and the Triple *Entente*.

MINUTES.

A further concession.

H. N.

Aug[ust] 21, 1911

The 3rd paragraph is rather cynical but I think there is nothing which we need take up.

L. M.

E. G.

No. 741.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.

33765/48/11/34A.

(No. 237.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, D. August 23, 1911.

R. August 28, 1911.

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith, the text of the Russo-German Agreement, which was signed here on the 19th instant by the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs Monsieur Nératow, and the German Ambassador, Count Pourtales.

The Agreement as it now stands in its final shape, differs in two important points from the revised Draft, of which I forwarded you a summary in my despatch No. 201, Secret, of the 12th of last month.⁽²⁾ By the addition of a few words to the 2nd Article, Germany acquires the right to secure for herself the Concession for the Tehran-Khanikin Line, should neither Russia nor the financial syndicate to whom Russia may delegate her authority, have commenced its construction within the prescribed term; while, by the suppression of the second paragraph of the third Article, she evades taking any engagement in writing with respect to the construction of railways in the zone situated between the Bagdad line and the Russian and Persian frontiers to the north of Khanikin. As the linking up of the Bagdad Railway with the future Russian Railway system in Northern Persia is one of the main advantages, which Germany hopes to derive from the Agreement, it is not surprising that she should claim the reversion of the Concession for the Line, by which this object is to be effected as a guarantee that the engagement taken by Russia on the subject will not remain a dead letter. On the other hand the formal recognition of this

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King; and as having been seen at Berlin.]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 710-2, No. 733.]

claim by Russia may, as the *Novoe Vremya* points out, provide direct railway access for German goods to the Persian capital before the construction of the Railway from the Russian frontier to Tehran has rendered a similar service to Russian trade. This is after all but a remote danger which Russia should not find it difficult to avert; and her recognition of Germany's right to this reversion is but the logical outcome of her consent to the linking up of the two Railway systems.

The omission of the clause in the 3rd Article of the Russian Draft, embodying the engagements which Germany was to take with regard to the construction of railways running towards the Russian and Persian frontiers, is a much more important matter. In the conversations which I had with Monsieur Sazonow last winter His Excellency repeatedly assured me that this was a point on which he would not yield, though it might be necessary to replace the clause in question by an exchange of Secret Notes. When therefore Monsieur Neratow told me in strict confidence that Germany had given a categorical verbal assurance that she would not build any railways in the Zone in question except such as she was entitled to build under the Bagdad Railway Concession, I reminded His Excellency of the language which Monsieur Sazonow had formerly held to me and expressed my surprise at his being contented with such a verbal assurance as well as at his admitting Germany's right to construct short lines from the Diala towards the Persian frontier and from Mosul to Arbil in addition to the line from some point on the main line to Diarbekir and Kharput.

His Excellency replied that the two lines to which I had referred were unimportant branch lines of no strategic value and that the Russian military authorities had waived the objections which had been originally raised to them. After the communication which they had made to the Porte in consequence of the publication of the Draft Agreement by the "*Evening Times*"⁽³⁾ the German Government had declared that it was impossible for them to give any engagement in writing with respect to the railways referred to in the Third Article. The insertion in the Agreement of a special Article respecting these railways was now altogether out of the question, while the secret was sure to leak out should recourse be had to an exchange of Notes. The Russian Government, had, therefore, accepted their verbal assurance. Monsieur Nératow added that in doing this they had given a moral satisfaction to Germany's "*amour-propre*"; that the construction of these railways was a matter which only interested Russia; and that the fact that an engagement had been consigned to writing was nowadays no guarantee that that engagement would be kept.

I remarked that His Excellency seemed to me to underestimate the importance of the two branch lines, to which I had drawn his attention, and that in any case I thought the Imperial Government had done more than sufficient to gratify Germany's "*amour-propre*" by withdrawing their opposition to the whole Bagdad Railway scheme. Monsieur Sazonow, I said, had always told me that, whatever might be the interpretation given to the term "*Bagdad Railway*," Russia would continue to co-operate with us just as much after as before the signature of the Agreement; and I should like to know whether His Excellency thought that it would still be possible for Russia to support us, should difficulties arise with regard to the construction of the Gulf Section. Monsieur Nératow replied that Russia was under no obligation to facilitate the construction of the railway and that though she could not now have recourse to methods of direct obstruction, she could still co-operate with us in many ways and give us her indirect support. Though His Excellency's language was not very clear on this point, I gather that Russia would still be able to support any scheme, which we might put forward with regard to the construction of the Gulf Section, even though it did not meet with Germany's approval.⁽⁴⁾

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 601-3, No. 638.]

⁽⁴⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's despatch (No. 240) of September 5, 1911, approved Sir G. Buchanan's language. (F.O. 33765/48/11/34A.)]

The Agreement, taken as a whole, must undoubtedly be regarded as a diplomatic success for Germany; and a retrospect of the various phases of the negotiations, which have extended over the past nine months, does not tend to enhance the reputation of those who have conducted them on Russia's behalf. The initial mistake was committed when Monsieur Sazonow allowed himself to be entrapped, during his conversations with Monsieur Kiderlen, into giving verbal assurances of which he did not at the time realise the full significance. This was due to his want of experience as a negotiator and to his not weighing his words rather than to the deliberate intention of throwing over the other two members of the Triple Entente. Thus, without any previous consultation with them, he had pledged Russia to withdraw her opposition to the Bagdad Railway scheme; and, though he subsequently endeavoured to restrict this engagement to the Konieh-Bagdad line, it was clear from the outset that Germany would hold him to the strict letter of his bond. His disregard of the Understanding on which the three Governments had hitherto acted that no individual member of the Triple Entente was to conclude an arrangement with Germany till the other two had obtained satisfaction for their respective claims; the vacillation and deplorable weakness which he displayed in the discussion over the Khanikin-Tehran Line; and the uneasiness created by the vague assurances which he had exchanged at Potsdam to the effect that neither Russia nor Germany would join any combination that could in any way be directed against the other—all combined to produce the impression that a serious blow had been struck at the stability of the Triple Entente. Fortunately these fears proved unfounded; for, despite his occasional back-slidings, Monsieur Sazonow was at heart a firm advocate of the maintenance of that understanding. Monsieur Nératow, who took up the threads of the negotiations, when Monsieur Sazonow was incapacitated by illness, is equally sound on this point though he has been obliged to follow in Monsieur Sazonow's footsteps and to make further graceful concessions to Germany. He assures me, however, that there is absolutely nothing kept back that does not appear in the published text of the Agreement, beyond the verbal assurances given by Germany respecting railway construction to the North of Khanikin, and that since the German Chancellor made his statement in the Reichstag last winter,⁽⁵⁾ nothing more has been said about the combinations, into which Germany and Russia should refrain from entering.

The signature of the Russo-German Agreement at this juncture has come somewhat as a surprise, as it was generally expected that the negotiations would have dragged on for weeks, if not for months. The reason for this acceleration is probably to be found in the present critical state of international politics. To have signed an agreement with Russia, at a moment when she is engaged in a very delicate conversation with France, is no doubt regarded by Germany as a valuable asset, while Monsieur Kiderlen may congratulate himself on having scored a success, which will strengthen his position with his countrymen should he eventually decide to content himself with a moderate portion of the compensation which he originally demanded from France. Russia, on the other hand, is watching with keen interest the development of the situation in Persia, and, as it is impossible to foresee at present what may be the outcome of the crisis through which that country is passing, she is no doubt well pleased to have concluded an arrangement under which Germany leaves her a free hand in northern Persia.

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

Enclosure in No. 741.

Agreement between Germany and Russia ("Potsdam Agreement"), signed at St. Petersburg, August 19, 1911.

Les Gouvernements russe et allemand, partant du principe de l'égalité de traitement pour le commerce de toutes les nations en Perse;

(5) [*cp. supra*, p. 578, No. 620, and note (5).]

Considérant, d'une part, que la Russie possède dans ce pays des intérêts spéciaux et que, d'autre part, l'Allemagne n'y poursuit que des buts commerciaux; se sont mis d'accord sur les points suivants :

Article I.

Le Gouvernement Impérial d'Allemagne déclare qu'il n'a pas l'intention de rechercher pour lui-même ou d'appuyer en faveur de ressortissants allemands ou de sujets étrangers,—au nord d'une ligne partant de Kasri Chirin, passant par Isfahan, Iezd et Khakh et aboutissant à la frontière afghane à la latitude de Ghasik,—de concessions de chemins de fer, de routes, de navigation et de télégraphes.

Article II.

De son côté, le Gouvernement Russe, ayant en vue d'obtenir du Gouvernement Persan une concession pour la création d'un réseau de voies ferrées dans le nord de la Perse s'engage à demander, entre autres, une concession pour la construction d'une voie qui doit partir de Téhéran et aboutir à Khanékine pour raccorder sur la frontière turco-persan ledit réseau à la ligne Sadidjé-Khanékine, dès que cet embranchement du chemin de fer Koniah-Bagdad aura été achevé. Une fois cette concession obtenue, les travaux de construction de ladite ligne devront être commencés dans deux ans au plus tard après l'achèvement de l'embranchement Sadidjé-Khanékine et terminés dans le courant de quatre années. Le Gouvernement Russe se réserve de fixer en son temps le tracé définitif de la ligne en question tout en tenant compte des desiderata du Gouvernement Allemand à ce sujet. Les deux Gouvernements faciliteront le trafic international sur la ligne Khanékine-Téhéran ainsi que sur celle de Khanékine à Bagdad en évitant toutes mesures qui pourraient l'entraver, telles que l'établissement de droits de transit ou l'application d'un traitement différentiel. Si au bout de deux années à partir du moment où l'embranchement Sadidjé-Khanékine du chemin de fer Koniah-Bagdad aura été achevé, il n'est pas procédé à la construction de la ligne Khanékine-Téhéran, le Gouvernement Russe avisera le Gouvernement Allemand qu'il renonce à la concession se rapportant à cette dernière ligne. Le Gouvernement Allemand sera libre dans ce cas de rechercher de son côté cette concession.

Article III.

Reconnaissant l'importance générale qu'aurait pour le commerce international la réalisation du chemin de fer de Bagdad, le Gouvernement Russe s'engage à ne pas prendre de mesures visant à en entraver la construction ou à empêcher la participation de capitaux étrangers à cette entreprise, à condition, bien entendu, que cela n'entraîne pour la Russie aucun sacrifice de nature pécuniaire ou économique.

Article IV.

Le Gouvernement Russe pourra confier l'exécution du projet de la ligne de chemin de fer reliant son réseau en Perse à la ligne Sadidjé-Khanékine à un groupe financier étranger à son choix, au lieu de la faire construire lui-même.

Article V.

Indépendamment de la manière dont la construction de la ligne en question sera effectuée, le Gouvernement Russe se réserve le droit à toute participation aux travaux qu'il pourrait désirer ainsi que celui d'entrer en possession dudit chemin de fer au prix des frais réels encourus par le constructeur. Les Hautes Parties Contractantes s'engagent en outre à se faire participer mutuellement à tous les privilèges de tarifs ou d'autre nature que l'une d'elles pourrait obtenir à l'égard de cette ligne.

Dans tous les cas les autres stipulations du présent arrangement resteront en vigueur.

No. 742.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.
 33766/48/11/34.
 (No. 238.)

St. Petersburg, D. August 23, 1911.

Sir,

R. August 28, 1911.

In a conversation which I had with the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, just after the signature of the Russo-German Agreement, His Excellency informed me that the publication of the text of the Agreement in the semi-official "Rossia" would be accompanied by an article on Russia's position with regard to the 4% Customs increase and the "Triple Entente."

The article duly appeared in the issue of August 20th. It is mostly devoted to a recapitulation of the terms of the Agreement and the only points that call for attention are passages in which is given what may presumably be taken to be the official Russian interpretation of certain of its provisions.

With regard to the preamble, for instance, it is stated that the term "special interests" must evidently be understood to mean "the interests of a political, strategic and economic character" which Russia possesses in Persia in virtue of her geographical position. It will be remembered that in the original draft the words used were "special political interests" and that the word "political" was omitted from the text as eventually adopted for signature.

The period allowed for the completion of the Tehran-Khanikin line is somewhat vaguely stated in Art[icle] 1 of the Agreement, which might be interpreted as allowing either four or six years for the completion of the line. The "Rossia" article shows clearly that the Russian interpretation is that two years are allowed for obtaining the concession and a further four years for the actual work of construction.

With regard to Article III the semi-official article states that the reserve as to pecuniary and economic sacrifices which Russia couples with her promise not to impede the Baghdad Railway scheme, refers clearly to the proposed four per cent. Customs increase.

In a somewhat cryptic paragraph the article then refers to the wider scope of the Potsdam conversations, in which the interests of the two Powers in the Near East, as well as in Persia, were discussed. The present agreement, it says, does not give expression to all the conclusions arrived at by the two statesmen at Potsdam, but nevertheless the friendly relations established at Potsdam remain in full force and give Russia, as well as others, an undoubted right to reckon on an entirely friendly policy on the part of Germany in questions of railways and other matters affecting the political, economic, and strategic interests of Russia.

The article then asserts that the Agreement in no way changes the grouping of the European Powers, and concludes with the words: "The Franco-Russian Alliance and the Franco-Anglo-Russian understanding remain, as formerly, the firm basis of the policy of the Russian Government."

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King; and as having been seen at Berlin.]

No. 743.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1237.
 33767/48/11/34.
 (No. 239.)

St. Petersburg, D. August 23, 1911.

Sir,

R. August 28, 1911.

The publication of the Russo-German Agreement with regard to Persia has in general been received coldly by the St. Petersburg Press and Monsieur Nératow

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been seen at Berlin]

appears to be somewhat disappointed by the absolute lack of any display of enthusiasm.

The "Novoe Vremya" breathes a sigh of relief on at last being delivered from the long strain of uncertainty, but otherwise has little of good or ill to say of the Agreement. It points out, however, that Germany's declaration of political "désintéressement" is merely a repetition of her assurances with regard to Morocco and wonders whether it will prove any more binding.

The article compliments Russian diplomacy on its action in including in the zone, in which Germany undertakes not to seek concessions, the small strip of neutral territory along the Afghan frontier. It thinks this will tend to prevent complications, since, theoretically at least, it will exclude German adventurers from that region. It has also a good word to say for Russia's reserve as to her pecuniary and economic interests with regard to the Bagdad Railway, which will enable her to withhold her consent to any increase of the Turkish Customs dues destined for the purposes of the Railway.

It criticises sharply the arrangement with regard to the Tehran-Khanikin line and says that the only chance left for Russia is to build the trans-Persian line to India as speedily as possible. Otherwise Russian traders in north Persia may as well shut up shop and return home, for their places will be taken by Germans.

The "Rech," which is always violently against the Government, takes the view that "Russian trade in Persia has been sacrificed." It cites Algeciras and Morocco as standing warnings and concludes with the taunt that the date of the publication of the Agreement was chosen in order to humiliate Russia in the eyes of her ally France, and to give Germany a breathing space in the ridiculous position in which she found herself in the Morocco negotiations.

The "Bourse Gazette" remarks sarcastically that in the Agreement "obligations are distributed evenly, at least, numerically speaking." Russia has lost everything that she once possessed in Persia, but this is due rather to the lethargy and greed of Russian traders than to any fault of Germany, who has only acted in accordance with modern notions and left out of consideration everything but her own material interests. The paper does not think that Germany will follow her Moroccan tactics in the case of the Russo-German Agreement, as the maintenance of good relations with Russia is a political dogma of the German Emperor.

The "Sviet," the organ of the Nationalists and the Right, says that the balance of the Agreement is much in favour of Germany but nevertheless welcomes it as putting an end to the long period of suspense, and in the hope that it may induce Russia to wake up and build her own railway into Persia and so save it from the Germans.

The "Zemschina," the organ of the extreme Right, takes an unexpectedly anti-German view. It points out that, with any considerable development of German trade in Persia, Germany, whatever she may say now, is bound to have political interests in that country. The dangerous part of the Agreement is that in which a limit is set for the construction of the Tehran-Khanikin Line. The Article urges the immediate construction of railways in Persia, but warns its readers against being carried away by fantastic schemes, such as the line to India. What is required is a cheap type of line to carry goods at slow speed.

Articles still continue to appear in many of the papers, but the above brief summaries of the published views of the chief papers of widely different political complexion, are, I think, sufficient to show that the Agreement has not been hailed with enthusiasm in any quarter.

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir A. Nicolson.⁽¹⁾

Private.⁽²⁾

My dear Nicolson,

St. Petersburg, August 24, 1911.

Many thanks for your letter, from which I was glad to learn that you are the better for your stay at Buxton.⁽³⁾

The chief event here since I last wrote to you has been the signing of the Russo-German Agreement. It came somewhat as a surprise, as it was generally believed that the negotiations would drag on during the summer. Germany, however, no doubt thought that the publication of an Agreement with Russia would make a certain impression in the world at this moment. If so she must have been rather disappointed, as the Agreement has fallen very flat and France is in no way disturbed by it. Here it has not at all a "bonne presse" and the Government is attacked on the one hand for sacrificing the interests of the Moscow merchants by opening up the Persian markets to German goods and, on the other, for choosing this particular moment, when the Franco-German negotiations are still in a critical stage, for its signature. I am personally inclined to believe that the Russian Government thought it might be well to secure a declaration of Germany's "désintéressement" in north Persia, so as to have a freer hand to deal with the situation should intervention become necessary.

Neratow has, I think, been very foolish to content himself with a verbal assurance that German[y] will construct no railways, except those which she is entitled to build under the Bagdad Railway Concession, to the North of Khanikin. Louis seems to think that she must have received some written engagement on the subject, which he has promised not to communicate to us, but Neratow's language to myself was so precise that I cannot believe this. He remarked that written engagements were often no better kept than verbal ones and added that, in not insisting on that point, Russia had given a moral satisfaction to Germany's amour propre. I only trust that this moral satisfaction to his vanity may dispose Kiderlen to take a more moderate line in his dealings with the French.

Louis, who came to see me today, told me that Neratow in a conversation, which he had had with him the day before the Agreement was signed, spoke as if he had still reserved his right to interpret the term "Bagdad Railway" as the "Railway up to Bagdad." This, however, is not my impression. Pourtalés, when he brought back the German answer from Berlin, told Neratow that his Government could not accept this interpretation; and on my asking Neratow whether he had nevertheless persisted in the reserve which he had made with regard to the meaning of these words answered somewhat vaguely that its interpretation was "douteuse." In a subsequent conversation which I had with him an hour or two before the Agreement was actually signed, I asked whether Russia would still be able to co-operate with and support us with regard to the Gulf Section. He replied that they could not join in a "démarche" at Berlin to oppose or obstruct the construction of the line, but as they were under no obligation to facilitate the construction they could probably support us indirectly. I suggested that they might be able to do so in the event of our putting forward a scheme for the construction of this section, which did not meet with Germany's approval, as support in such a case could not be treated as obstruction, and Neratow seemed to think that they could, though he did not bind himself in any way. . . .⁽⁴⁾

Ever yours,

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

⁽¹⁾ [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Prime Minister. The endorsement is initialled by Sir Edward Grey.]

⁽²⁾ [Carnock MSS., Vol. III of 1911.]

⁽³⁾ [Not reproduced, as the letter cannot be traced.]

⁽⁴⁾ [The rest of the letter refers to the Morocco question and to the appointment of Major Stokes, but adds nothing of importance to information given elsewhere.]

CHAPTER XC.

ANGLO-RUSSIAN FRICTION IN PERSIA.

I.—THE SITUATION IN PERSIA, 1908-10.

[*ED. NOTE.*—The international aspect of the Persian question between the signing of the Anglo-Russian Convention in 1907 (*v Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IV, *passim*) and the appointment of Mr. Shuster in 1911 appears to be sufficiently illustrated by extracts from the Annual Reports for Russia for the years 1908-10 *cp. G.P.*, XXVII (II), pp. 721-824, Chapter 217; E. G. Browne: *The Persian Revolution*, 1905-9, (Cambridge, 1910); Brigadier-General Sir Percy Sykes: *The History of Persia* (3rd Edition, London, 1930), Chapters LXXXIII-IV.]

No. 745.

Extract from the Annual Report for Russia for the Year 1908.

(Enclosure in Despatch from Sir A. Nicolson (No. 92) of February 8, 1909,
R. February 15, 1909.)

F.O. 371/727.
6057/6057/09/38.

7. *Persian Affairs.*

28. The situation in Persia seriously preoccupied the Russian Government during the whole of 1908. During the first month of the year, the Russian Government were chiefly engaged with the Turco-Persian frontier question, to which I propose to refer later, and with the appointment of a French financial adviser to the Persian Government. The instructions of M. Bizot, who was selected by the French Government for the above post, were concurred in by the Russian Government, who had been anxious that he should proceed to his post as soon as possible. In the early part of the year the relations between the Shah and the Assembly were strained and there was some fear that the Shah might be forcibly deposed and his life endangered. Arrangements were made between the Russian and the British Governments as to the asylum which might be accorded to the Shah were he to take refuge in the Legations, and also as to his safe transfer to the coast under a joint British and Russian escort. No necessity arose for giving effect to this arrangement.

It may be mentioned that in the spring there appeared to be some possibility of the Persian Government applying to Germany for advisers and instructors, and also for financial assistance and the Russian Government cordially concurred with His Majesty's Government in taking such measures as were possible to prevent such application from being made. The fear of Germany obtaining a substantial footing in Persia is always present to the mind of the Russian Government, and there is no doubt that they will always be ready to co-operate in checking an increase of German influence at Teheran.

The recitals of the events which occurred in Persia during the spring and the summer, which culminated in the dissolution of a Persian Assembly under circumstances which caused a painful impression in England, will naturally find a more appropriate place in the Report from Teheran. There was for a time a certain tension in the relations between the British and Russian Legations at Teheran, which were in a measure reflected for a period at St. Petersburg and in London. There can be little doubt that the attitude of some Russian local officials was not in harmony with the desires which animated both Governments to work cordially together in Persia, and the conduct of the Russian Minister at Teheran on certain critical occasions was not of a character to render co-operation very easy. The Russian Government themselves were doubtless desirous of maintaining a close unity

of action, but it was, perhaps, inevitable that they were, to a certain extent, influenced by the reports which they received from their agents in Persia. They were under the impression, which to a great extent was subsequently removed, that British agents had allowed their sympathies for the popular or Nationalist party to become too active, while the British Government had good grounds for believing that the Russian agents were disposed to lend a certain support to the Shah and, therefore, indirectly to the reactionary party. These misunderstandings, however, disappeared, and perhaps it is not necessary to refer further to the slight cloud which for a time had arisen.

29. In August the Russian Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs suggested that an occasion might be taken for the two Governments to communicate through their Representatives at Teheran, a warning to the Shah that it was essential that he should fulfil the promises which he had given on the dissolution of the Assembly to convoke another Chamber on a fixed date. M. Tcharykoff feared that there were signs that the Shah was inclined to evade his engagements, and was drifting, encouraged by evil counsellors, into a reactionary policy which, if pushed far, would probably be disastrous to him personally and embarrassing to the British and Russian Governments. At the request of the British Government M. Tcharykoff drew up the draft of an Identic Communication which should be presented to the Shah by the two Representatives. This was approved by the British Government, and the identic note was communicated to the Shah on the 9th September.⁽¹⁾ In this note the Shah was requested to renew his declaration to maintain the Constitution, and to fix a date for the election and for a convocation of an Assembly. The Shah assured the Russian Minister at Teheran that he would issue the declaration when he had pacified Tabreez, which he trusted to effect within a few days. The Russian Minister received instructions to thank the Shah for these assurances, to which, it was hoped, effect would be given very shortly. M. Tcharykoff was of opinion that Tabreez might temporarily be excluded until order had been re-established, as it was clear that elections could not be held during the prevalence of disorder. The reply of the Shah to the identic note was considered by both Representatives as vague and unsatisfactory; but M. Tcharykoff thought it would be prudent not to exercise for the moment any further pressure on the Shah, as he had heard that the latter had verbally assured the Russian Minister that the proclamation would be issued very shortly. In fact, on the 26th September, the Shah issued a Manifesto convoking an Assembly for the 14th November, but declaring that elections would not be held in Azerbaijan until order had been re-established in that province. The Manifesto, on being examined, was found to be ambiguous, and, as M. Tcharykoff remarked, it was ornate, obscure, and contradictory. He expressed his readiness to join with His Majesty's Government in any steps which the latter might wish to take for the purpose of clearing up the contradictions in the document. Later the Russian Government agreed to join with His Majesty's Government in urging the Shah to extend the electoral law to Tabreez, and to grant an amnesty to all who had been in arms.

The representations and advice to the Shah appeared to have made little impression, and when in November the Shah issued a rescript practically abolishing the Constitution, His Majesty's Government considered that the moment had arrived for more serious measures. It had at one time been suggested that Russia and Great Britain should respectively seize the northern and southern customs, but this project was abandoned as having too much the character of a direct and forcible intervention in the affairs of Persia. But the last act of the Shah showed that friendly advice was of little avail, and His Majesty's Government proposed that he should be informed that as he had failed to establish his authority in Azerbaijan,

⁽¹⁾ [Mr. Marling's despatch (No. 248), D. September 10, R. September 28, 1908, enclosed the text of the note. It was a joint communication and was made on September 8. The substance is summarized accurately above. (F.O. 371/577. 33434/Case 2/08/34.)]

and by his deliberate violation of his promises regarding the Constitution had destroyed all hope of his being able to maintain order, the two Governments would look to the forces of Sattar Khan to protect foreigners and trade, and would hold the Shah responsible for any further disturbances which might arise if he attempted to regain his position so long as the Constitution remained suspended.

Situation at Tabreez.

30. It may be well to mention here that after the dissolution of the Persian Assembly the town of Tabreez and its adjacent districts had been in open revolt against the Shah's authority, and the Nationalist party, under a leader called Sattar Khan, had succeeded in obtaining the upper hand. They completely routed the forces of the Shah, and Azerbaijan was the scene of conflicts and disorders. This state of affairs caused much anxiety to the Russian Government, not only on account of the injuries which it caused to Russian trade, but also in view of the proximity of the scene of disturbances to the Caucasian frontier. The Caucasus is still one of the most disturbed districts in Russia, and many Russian revolutionaries had proceeded to Tabreez to support the malcontents in their movement against the Persian Government. These revolutionaries, mostly men of a desperate character, formed, according to the Russian Government, the backbone of Sattar Khan's forces. The Russian Government considered that the whole movement in Azerbaijan differed in character and in aims from that which had been prevalent in other parts of Persia. It was not, in their view, simply an effort to induce the Shah and his Government to introduce a liberal and constitutional form of administration, but was directed towards separating Azerbaijan from the Persian monarchy and establishing an autonomous province, or possibly even an independent socialistic Republic. They, therefore, regarded with real anxiety the successful progress of Sattar Khan, and they feared that what was occurring in Azerbaijan might react on the situation in Caucasus and give rise to more serious troubles in that province. They were further haunted with the suspicion, almost amounting to a conviction, that the movement of Sattar Khan was encouraged by the Young Turkish party, and certain evidence, which was subsequently shown to be of an exceedingly slender character, was adduced to show the closeness of the relations between the Persian Nationalists and the Young Turkish Committee in Constantinople. The Russian Government were at one time so convinced of the connection between the two parties that they made certain representations themselves at Constantinople, and enlisted the unofficial assistance of His Majesty's Government in also making inquiries, as to the alleged encouragement given by the Young Turkish party. They also were under the impression that a few German officers were assisting Sattar Khan with their skill and experience, though the very careful inquiries made by His Majesty's Consular officers showed that such was not the fact. This nervousness on the part of the Russian Government proved that their anxiety was sincere, and that to them the situation in Azerbaijan was a matter of very grave concern. It is quite possible that the reports which they received from their Consular and financial officials in Tabreez exaggerated the real position, and that the danger to the lives and properties of Russian subjects was not so imminent or so great as the Russian Government were given to understand. Still, rightly or wrongly, there is no doubt that during a certain period in the late autumn the Russian Government were seriously alarmed, and I think that this fact should be taken into consideration and that it should be recognized that they showed considerable patience and wise forbearance in not adopting active measures of intervention. At one moment such intervention very nearly occurred, and in consequence of the destruction of a post-house or two on the Julfa-Tabreez road, and the alarming reports which were received from Tabreez itself, a contingent of troops was moved to Julfa and was on the point of being despatched to Tabreez to reinforce the Russian Consular guards. At Tabreez, besides the Consulate, there are also the establishment of the Russian

Bank and of the Julfa Road Administration; and it was stated that the road, which had been constructed at a very considerable expense, had of late been entirely or almost closed to caravans, and that its revenues had very largely diminished. These were, it must be admitted, plausible grounds for intervention, and I do not think that Russia could fairly have been blamed had she proceeded to take measures for the protection of her interests. She, however, abstained from doing so; and though at the time of writing no particularly dangerous developments have occurred in the situation at Azerbaijan, it cannot be said that the outlook is entirely reassuring, and it appears to be still doubtful whether the Shah or Sattar Khan will eventually obtain the mastery. In the latter case, the possibility is not excluded that Azerbaijan may throw off all allegiance to the Persian Central Government, and the ultimate consequences would be exceedingly interesting to watch.

Pressure on Shah to Grant a Constitution.

31. After this very hasty sketch of the attitude of Russia towards the movement, the proposal of His Majesty's Government, which has been mentioned above, was not received with full approbation by M. Isvolsky. I should remark that His Majesty's Government had also suggested that the Consular Representative of Russia and of Great Britain should inform Sattar Khan that Russia would only be able to abstain from intervention on the condition that his forces secured protection for foreign subjects and trade generally, and for Russian interests in particular, owing to the proximity of the province to the Russian frontier. There were some points in the British proposal which caused hesitation in the mind of M. Isvolsky. In the first place, he was of opinion that it amounted to an intervention on behalf of one party in the struggle, and he had understood that the wish of His Majesty's Government had been to allow both parties to fight out their differences between themselves. He further doubted whether the grant of a Constitution would calm the agitation in Azerbaijan, which he considered had for its object other aims than the establishment of a constitutional régime. He further questioned whether it could be taken as a fact that the Shah would necessarily fail in eventually re-establishing his authority in Azerbaijan, and he objected to any direct official relations with Sattar Khan, which would indirectly encourage the latter to believe that he was in a measure an independent local authority. The question was allowed to drop, and the two Governments continued to exercise pressure on the Shah to act up to his engagements. The Russian Government, however, of late, have shown a certain inclination not to press the Shah too hardly, and though they have every intention and desire of co-operating in close union with Great Britain, and also to lead the Shah into the path of liberal reform and constitutional principles, they have some doubt whether it would be prudent to force on him the convocation of an Assembly, and then leave him defenceless and powerless in face of popular elements which might at a given moment display revolutionary tendencies. M. Isvolsky has more than once stated that the Shah with all his defects should, if possible, be kept on his throne, as were he deposed there would be no barrier against anarchy. In short, so far as is known, there would be no one to put in his place, and were anarchy to ensue, it would be more than probable that both the British and Russian Governments would be compelled to intervene, and intervention at the present moment is as distasteful to Russia as it is to Great Britain. The views of the Russian Government which will probably be shortly embodied in detail in a Memorandum for submission to His Majesty's Government, are, generally speaking, to urge the Shah to take immediate steps for the reform of his administration and for removing those of his present Counsellors who are known to be thoroughly reactionary, and for adding to the Council of Notables, which he has recently instituted, some members elected by the mercantile and respectable classes. The Council should devote its first attention to elaborating an Electoral Law, suitable to the country, and that no time should be lost in having all preparations ready for

the early convocation of an Assembly. The French Financial Adviser should also be required to furnish a report which should explain how best to meet the most pressing financial needs, and that the Shah should be given to understand that if he carries out loyally and speedily the measures which will be proposed by the two Governments, some financial aid, under proper guarantees as to its expenditure, will be afforded to him. The above will, I believe, be the general lines on which the Russian Memorandum will be drawn, and it is to be hoped that no undue delay will be allowed to occur in its presentation to His Majesty's Government. I am not aware whether any guarantees will be suggested for the Shah personally, but presumably if such be the case, he will be informed that the guarantees remain valid only so long as he faithfully fulfils the engagements which he will be requested to undertake. The Russian Government are feeling convinced that the chief difficulty in the whole situation is the deplorable financial situation, and the discontent and distress which naturally arise throughout all branches of the Administration when the Exchequer is depleted either by the natural form of circumstances or by avaricious hands having plunged into its coffers. They recognize that the strictest safeguards must be taken that if an advance be granted the proceeds are honestly and justly expended, and I think that they also sufficiently appreciate that care must be taken that the funds which may be supplied are not in any way furnished for the purpose of fortifying the position of the Shah against the popular party, but are accorded for the sole object of enabling the machinery of Government to run as smoothly as circumstances may permit. The Shah's Government, like any other Government, must be carried on, and I believe that it is the wish of Russia equally with Great Britain that that Government should be a liberal and just, and, if possible, an honest one.

8. *Survey of Russian Attitude in regard to Persia.*

32. On a general survey of the Russian Government throughout the Persian complications, I venture to think that they have acted loyally in the spirit of the understanding with Great Britain. It is inevitable that on certain points their views may not have been in exact harmony with those of His Majesty's Government, but I think they have shown always a desire to meet the wishes of Great Britain, and when the traditions, habits, and methods of Russian bureaucracy and diplomacy are taken into consideration, it is to my mind remarkable and satisfactory that the co-operation of Russia has been so cordial and of so liberal a character. The Anglo-Russian Convention, in so far as Persia is concerned, has led to more beneficial results than the most sanguine could have been anticipated, and those who are still sceptical and critical in regard to that instrument should figure to themselves what would have been the situation if all that has recently been passing in Persia had occurred a few years earlier. It is quite possible, and indeed undeniable, that certain local Russian agents have not been able to adapt themselves to the new order of things, and have perhaps pursued a line of action which is not in accordance with the wishes and aims of their Government; but the Convention has but recently concluded its first year of existence, and it would have required the wand of a magician to have swept away in so short a period the clouds of suspicion, rivalry, and distrust which for so many generations have obscured the relations between the two countries. It should be remembered that these hindrances to a thoroughly good understanding exist in both countries, and in common justice it should be stated that Russia has on occasions been subjected to criticisms which she has scarcely merited, and little or no allowance has been made in certain quarters for the exceptionally trying circumstances in which she has from time to time been placed. It is greatly to the credit of M. Isvolsky that he has acted so loyally and straightforwardly with Great Britain throughout the Persian complications, and that he has declined to be diverted from his course when considerable pressure was put upon him to deviate from the line which he regarded as the only true one in view of the engagements of Russia with Great Britain.

Extract from the Annual Report for Russia for the Year 1909.

(Enclosure in Despatch from Sir A. Nicolson (No. 683) of December 30, 1909,
R. January 3, 1910.)

F.O. 371/976.

159/159/10/38.

11. *Persia.*

(A.)—*Steps taken by the Russian and British Governments in regard to Advice to be tendered to the Shah, and as to Money Advance.*

At the commencement of 1909 His Majesty's Government were awaiting a memorandum from the Russian Government which should propound a programme to be followed in regard to the situation in Persia. The condition of affairs in that country was such that it was of urgent necessity that the Shah should take some measures towards satisfying the demands of his subjects by convoking an Assembly and exhibiting a firm intention to reorganise and reform his Government and the administration. On the 17th January M. Isvolsky communicated the memorandum which he had had under careful preparation for some time past.⁽¹⁾ The memorandum gave a preliminary and graphic sketch of the deplorable condition into which the administration and finances of Persia had fallen, and the consequent anarchy and disorder. It further stated that it was an unquestionable fact that Persia could not emerge from the morass in which she was plunged except by a reform of her finances, and by the realisation, within possible limits, of the desire expressed by her population for some form of representative government. The Russian Government, therefore, proposed that, while maintaining the principle of non-intervention, friendly advice should be tendered to the Shah to call to office energetic and capable men who had already given proofs of their capacity, and especial mention was made of the Saad-ed-Dowleh and the Nasr-ul-Mulk. The two Governments should also express the desire to see a constitutional régime established in Persia, without insisting on the recall of the old Assembly, whose defects had been explained in an earlier portion of the memorandum. The Shah was to be advised to proceed without delay to nominate a body of enlightened men who should draw up an electoral law in conformity with the historical habits and customs of the Persian people. If the Shah followed the advice of the two Governments the latter would assist him in obtaining an external loan of a more or less considerable amount, on the condition that a special commission was instituted composed of the Directors of the Russian and British banks and of some Persian delegates. This commission was to be invested with considerable powers of control over the expenditure of the proceeds of the loan, and was to supervise the several departmental estimates which were to be drawn up in conformity with a budget framed by the Persian Ministry of Finance in conjunction with the commission. This latter body was also to assist the Finance Ministry in revising and regularising the laws respecting the "malat" tax. Moreover, in order to give the Persian Government a proof of their friendly sentiments Russia and England would be ready to grant a sum of 200,000*l.*, as an advance on the future loan, under the conditions formulated in 1906. This advance was to be devoted to meeting the immediate expenses which would be incurred by the introduction of the reforms. M. Isvolsky gave verbal explanations at the time that he would not press the question of an external loan until M. Bizot, the financial adviser of the Persian Government, had made his report, and he was prepared to admit that no advance should be made until the Shah had given practical effect to his promises and until the British and Russian representatives at Tehran were of

⁽¹⁾ [Sir A. Nicolson's despatch (No. 38), D. January 17, R. January 22, 1909, enclosed the text of M. Isvolski's memorandum, dated January 16. (F.O. 371/803. 2848/Case 2/09/34.)]

opinion that the advance could be properly made. M. Isvolsky had hitherto maintained that the mere grant of a Constitution was not in itself sufficient to replace Persia on her legs, or would automatically lead to the re-establishment of peace and order. He considered that it was of the first necessity to provide the Shah and his Government with funds to enable them to make some progress in the initial stages of the path on which it was hoped that they would enter.

On the 11th February the reply of His Majesty's Government to the Russian memorandum was communicated to M. Isvolsky.⁽²⁾ His Majesty's Government were of opinion that the best course would be for England and Russia to stand aloof from the internal affairs of Persia, and to allow the existing chaos to continue until the strongest element in the country gained the day. They, however, recognised that it would be difficult for Russia to pursue this course, owing to her propinquity to the most disturbed portions of Persia, and they were, therefore, prepared to co-operate with the Russian Government in regard to future action. His Majesty's Government were assured that if a constitution were granted tranquillity would be in a great measure restored, and they considered that the efforts of the two Governments should be directed towards inducing the Shah to fulfil his promises in this respect. They quite approved of the suggestion of the Russian Government that the Shah should be advised to call to his council able and energetic men to assist in framing a scheme of representative government; but they considered that it would be advisable at the same time to recommend that the reactionary advisers round the Shah should be dismissed, and they also thought that a general amnesty should be proclaimed for all under arms. His Majesty's Government further considered that a date should be named beyond which the Shah should no longer postpone the fulfilment of his pledges, and if by a named date a representative government had not been granted that the Shah should be informed that he would obtain no support of any kind from the two Governments, who would then reconsider their attitude. As to an external loan His Majesty's Government desired that the question should be deferred until the financial adviser had made his report, and in any case they could not consent to make any advance until an elected Assembly had approved of the transaction. They also were of opinion that the question of control could stand over until constitutional government was an accomplished fact; and they were opposed to lending money to the Shah under present conditions, as it would be regarded as a demonstration against the Constitutionalists and in favour of the personal government of His Majesty, and would constitute an interference in the internal affairs of Persia. M. Isvolsky was not, at first sight, pleased with the reply of the British Government, and he strongly demurred to the assumption that the establishment of a constitution would tranquillise the whole country. He was, however, most anxious that the two Governments should speedily arrive at an understanding as to the course to be pursued, as he was afraid lest the ever-increasing anarchy would reach a point where intervention would be absolutely necessary.

On the 19th February M. Isvolsky communicated certain proposals under eight heads, which he considered might form the basis of an agreement between the two Governments, and he was careful to explain that the suggestions were his personal views, and had not been submitted to the Council of Ministers.⁽³⁾ The proposals were as follows :—

1. To require immediate dismissal by the Shah of the Sadr Azam and Amir Bahadur Jang. The latter might retain his office as chief of the personal guard of the Shah.

(2) [Sir Edward Grey's despatch (No. 46) of February 3, 1909, enclosed the text of the memorandum, summarized above. (F.O. 371/803. 2848/Case 2/09/34.) Sir A. Nicolson's despatch (No. 97), D. February 10, R. February 15, 1909, reported that the memorandum had been communicated on February 9. (F.O. 371/804. 6062/Case 2/09/34.)]

(3) [Sir A. Nicolson's telegram (No. 87) of February 19, 1909, D. 4.35 P.M., R. 5.45 P.M., gave the text of the proposals quoted above. (F.O. 371/804. 6804/Case 2/09/34.)]

2. To obtain from the Shah the re-establishment of the constitutional régime by means of the reforms enumerated below.
3. The constitution of a Cabinet composed of persons to be recommended to him by the two legations.
4. Inclusion in the Council of the Empire of enlightened persons belonging to different parties, of whom some should be recommended to him by the two legations. The council should be entrusted with the elaboration of a new electoral law.
5. General amnesty for all those who had taken up arms against the Shah.
6. Dates to be fixed for the parliamentary elections and for convocation of the Assembly. These dates to be made known without delay in the entire country.
7. That as soon as the above preparatory measures have been carried out a certain sum should be advanced to the Persian Government, and the expenditure of this sum should be supervised by the Control Commission mentioned in the Russian memorandum of the 16th January.
8. A French treasurer-general with two assistants of the same nationality will assure the regular receipt of taxes.

The British Government on the 25th February made the following observations on the above proposals.⁽¹⁾ Nos. 2, 5, and 6 were accepted unconditionally. They were of opinion in regard to point No. 1 that Amir Bahadur Jang should not be allowed to hold any post at all at the palace, and they suggested that Sheikh Fazlullah should be removed from Tehran. They were opposed to point No. 3 as it would imply intervention and would entail an undesirable responsibility. They would accept point No. 4 if the recommendation was only given at the request of the Shah. As to point No. 7, His Majesty's Government would only accept it on condition that a phrase was introduced to the effect that an advance would be made as soon as the Shah had established a constitutional Government, the personnel of which inspire confidence, and an elective assembly had approved the transaction. As to point No. 8 it was considered advisable not to mention it, as the Shah had already consented to the appointment of a treasurer-general and it might be regarded as due to foreign pressure.

M. Isvolsky at first was not favourably impressed with the reply of His Majesty's Government. He was disappointed that the London Cabinet continued to insist on the sanction of an elected assembly being an essential condition to an advance of funds. He argued that his proposals were practical, and that it would be dangerous to await the convocation of an assembly before granting, under close supervision, a moderate advance which would enable the reformed Persian Government to take the first steps towards setting the administrative machinery going. He feared that if His Majesty's Government maintained their present attitude the Shah would be deposed, and chaos and anarchy ensue. He however expressed his intention of continuing joint action with England, though he maintained his view that England was embarking on a course which would lead to no satisfactory results. On the 17th March M. Isvolsky communicated a memorandum as to the replies received from His Majesty's Government.⁽⁵⁾ He was ready to agree to the removal of Amir Bahadur Jang from all his posts, but he thought that if the Shah insisted very strongly the two Governments should be content with his dismissal from the Ministry of War and from his place on the council. As to the Sheikh Fazlullah, the Russian Government were of opinion that it would be better not to ask for his removal from Tehran as he possessed a great following, and any action against him

⁽⁴⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 247) of February 25, 1909, D. 5.45 P.M., informed Sir A. Nicolson of the views summarized above. (F.O. 371/804. 6804/Case 2/09/34.)]

⁽⁵⁾ [Sir A. Nicolson's telegram (No. 152) of March 18, 1909, D. 4.15 P.M., R. 5 P.M., summarized M. Isvolski's communication. (F.O. 371/805. 10476/Case 2/09/34.)]

might provoke much discontent. Moreover, he did not hold any official position. As to point No. 3 the Russian Government considered that it would be dangerous to leave to the Shah the exclusive right to choose the members of his Cabinet, and possibly several competent men would not be induced to take office unless they were assured that they were supported by the two Powers. They proposed in order to meet the objections of His Majesty's Government to recast point No. 3 as follows: "The constitution of a Cabinet composed of persons who would be suggested to the Shah by the British and Russian legations." As to point No. 4 the Russian Government were of opinion that the composition of the "Conseil de l'Empire" was of equal importance with that of the Cabinet, and they proposed that the same procedure should be followed in both cases without awaiting a request from the Shah. As to point No. 5 and a general amnesty the Russian Government took it for granted that that favour should not be extended to those who had committed crimes against common law, and all that the Governments need secure in such cases would be that the accused should receive an impartial trial. As to point No. 7 the Russian Government would be ready to make their share of the advance when the Shah had carried out the provisions of points Nos. 1-6, the British Government paying their share when the conditions which they had laid down had been fulfilled. Point No. 8 the Russian Government were willing to abandon.

On the 4th April the reply of His Majesty's Government was communicated to M. Isvolsky.⁽⁶⁾ The British Government announced that they would not insist on the removal of Sheikh Fazlullah, and if the Shah pressed very hard to keep Amir Bahadur Jang at the palace, no objection would be raised. As regards points Nos. 3 and 4 His Majesty's Government went very far in meeting M. Isvolsky's wishes and stated that they would agree to the two legations submitting privately to the Shah a list of suitable candidates both for the Cabinet and for the council; it being clearly understood that if unsuitable candidates were selected by the Shah no money would be accorded. His Majesty's Government agreed to the proposals of the Russian Government in respect to point No. 5 concerning the general amnesty. As to point No. 7 the British Government left it to the Russian Government to act as they might consider advisable in regard to their share of the advance, while maintaining that no British advance would be made until the Assembly had accepted the whole loan. As regards the question of the Russian advance M. Isvolsky at this time had somewhat modified his views, and stated that if one were made it would be limited to as small a sum as possible and doled out as late as possible. On the 8th April the Russian Government accepted all the modifications proposed in the British memorandum of the 4th April, and drew up a full text of the advice to be tendered to the Shah, and suggested that when communicating the programme to His Majesty a serious warning should be given that unless he accepted it entirely, the Russian and British Governments would discontinue giving him any advice and leave him completely to his own devices without any hope of obtaining any support from them.⁽⁷⁾ After some verbal alterations proposed by one side and the other, the text was finally agreed upon and telegraphic instructions were despatched to the British and Russian representatives at Tehran to make the communication to the Shah. The subsequent developments at the Persian capital naturally do not come within the scope of this report.

In regard to financial assistance to the Persian Government, it should be

⁽⁶⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 455) of April 3, 1909, D. 3-15 P.M., instructed Sir A. Nicolson to inform M. Isvolski of the views indicated above. (F.O. 371/805. 10476/Case 2/09/34.) Sir A. Nicolson's despatch (No. 217), D. April 5, R. April 13, 1909, enclosed the memorandum given to M. Isvolski as the result. (F.O. 371/805. 13595/Case 2/09/34.)]

⁽⁷⁾ [This is recorded in Sir A. Nicolson's telegram (No. 193) of April 8, 1909, D. 8-30 P.M., R. 10-45 P.M. (F.O. 371/805. 13416/Case 2/09/34.) Sir G. Barclay's despatch (No. 87), D. April 22, R. May 10, 1909, enclosed the text of the resulting communication to the Shah made on April 22. (F.O. 371/807. 17562/Case 2/09/34.)]

mentioned that after the deposition of the Shah,⁽⁸⁾ His Majesty's Government communicated with the Russian Government as to affording some pecuniary aid to the new Government. At first the Russian Government were much opposed to co-operating in any such measure, but eventually it was agreed that the Russian Bank and the Imperial Bank should offer a joint advance of 400,000 tomans on the security of the Crown jewels, under certain conditions. This proposal was made to the Persian Government, but the latter have placed before the Medjliss a project for obtaining an advance of 2,500,000 tomans which will naturally supersede the more modest offer of the two banks. This question will doubtless very shortly come before the two Governments for consideration, but at the time of writing (8th December) no formal or official communication has been received from the Persian Government.

(B).—*Disturbances in Persia. Reinforcement of Russian Consular Guards and despatch of Russian Troops.*

The disturbances which occurred in various parts of Persia, and especially in the northern provinces, will doubtless be recorded in the annual report from Tehran, and I would only wish to refer to the measures which the Russian Government felt themselves obliged to take in order to protect their own subjects and interests, and also, when necessary, those of other foreigners. In the earlier months of 1909, when disorders were breaking out at different localities in the Persian kingdom, the fear of M. Isvolsky was lest complete anarchy should ensue which would compel intervention by Russia. There is, I think, no doubt that Russia had no desire to be drawn into any intervention, such as occupation, in the affairs of Persia. She had, in short, no wish to embark on any Persian adventures. She, however, soon found it necessary to reinforce her consular guards at various places—Tabreez, Astarabad, Meshed, Resht, and elsewhere; but she kept His Majesty's Government fully informed of these steps, and accompanied them with assurances that they were merely taken to meet the urgent necessities of the situation, and to afford the necessary protection to Russian subjects and foreigners who might be exposed to serious dangers. No objections could well be raised to such measures, and, indeed, His Majesty's Government were also compelled on one or two occasions to adopt similar steps in the south of Persia. There were, however, two localities on which M. Isvolsky constantly kept an anxious eye. These were the Julfa—Tabreez road and the Resht—Tehran road. Tabreez especially was in the early months of the year in a peculiarly critical position, besieged by the forces of the Shah and with food supplies running short; while the road to the Russian frontier was practically closed. Within Tabreez, besides her subjects, Russia had some important institutions, which the Russian Government were informed were in continual danger, while the closure of the Julfa road was causing very serious losses to Russian trade and to the Russian Treasury. Considerable pressure was being brought to bear on the Russian Government to alleviate this condition of affairs, and though M. Isvolsky was ready to send succour and to re-open the road, he met with opposition both from the Ministry of War and from the authorities in the Caucasus, who were opposed to any military force being sent over the frontier. As M. Isvolsky explained at the time, the military authorities were, as was perhaps unusual, averse from any military expedition, and it was the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, as was also unusual, who was disposed to go forward. The situation at Tabreez rapidly became more critical, and the hardships of the inhabitants owing to dearth of food became more severe; efforts at mediation made by the British and Russian consuls led to no result, while the Shah declined to grant an armistice or to permit the introduction of food supplies. News

(8) [Mahomed Ali Mirza, who had succeeded his father as Shah in January 1907 (*v. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IV, p. 356, *Ed. note*; p. 424, *Ed. note*), was deposed on July 17, 1909. His second son, Ahmed Ali Mirza, aged 12, was proclaimed Shah, and Azad-ul-Mulk was elected Regent.]

reached the Russian Government that attacks were meditated on the two consulates, and, so far as could be judged from outside, there appeared to be real and imminent danger. The Russian Government informed the Shah that unless he permitted the introduction of a certain quantity of food supplies, the Russian Government would take forcible measures to that end. At length, on the 21st April, the Russian Government felt that they could no longer delay in despatching a force to relieve Tabreez, and, with the concurrence of His Majesty's Government, the order was given that a column should leave Julfa for that purpose. The force was a considerable one, consisting of three battalions of infantry, four sotnias of Cossacks, two batteries, and a company of sappers. It was thought advisable, in order to avoid the possibility of any misadventure, that the column should be of some strength, and, indeed, it numbered some 4,000 men. The instructions given to the commander, General Snarsky, were that he was to open the road so as to permit the introduction of food supplies, but that he was to abstain from any interference in the differences between the two contending parties, and in no wise to assume any administrative duties. He was to give the necessary protection to the foreign consulates and institutions and to all foreigners residing in the town. There was a delay of three or four days in getting the troops ready at Julfa, and in the meantime the Shah had given orders to allow food supplies to enter Tabreez and had declared a six days' armistice, which was not, however, observed by the Royalist forces. There was some question whether, in these circumstances, it would be necessary to send the column, but His Majesty's consul-general at Tabreez was of opinion that it should proceed on its march, though it would be advisable that it should not enter the town. This was agreed to by M. Isvolsky, and only a certain number of the troops entered Tabreez itself, the remainder camping outside. The action of the Russian Government was criticised in certain quarters, but no one could interpret it as being in any way in favour of the Shah or as directed against the Nationalists. On the contrary, it in reality compelled the forces of the Shah to raise the siege of Tabreez, and rescued that town from its imminent capture by the Royalist forces. Had the Russian general scrupulously followed his instructions and restricted his action subsequently to affording protection to foreigners, not a voice could have been raised with justice against the measures which the Russian Government had reluctantly felt themselves compelled to adopt. Unluckily General Snarsky assumed to himself on one or two occasions powers exceeding his instructions, and at the end of May went so far as to arrest some Nationalists and to blow up their houses. The two Nationalist chiefs, Sattar and Baghir Khans, took refuge in the Turkish consulate, though it was not quite clear whether they did so in consequence of the action of the Russian general, or owing to the allurements of the Turkish consul-general, who throughout the troubles at Tabreez had endeavoured to play an important part. Some representations were made to the Russian Government as to the conduct of their general, which, they explained, had been necessitated by some disturbances which had arisen, and which the Persian vice-governor had been himself powerless to suppress. They asserted that the measures adopted by the general had been approved by the Persian vice-governor, and that the peaceable population had been satisfied. Be that as it may, the Russian Government, who privately did not deny that General Snarsky had been a little too hasty, sent renewed instructions that he should keep strictly within the limits prescribed for his mission. As to the Nationalists who had taken refuge in the Turkish consulate-general, he was enjoined to abstain from interfering in the matter, as it was one to be dealt with between the Turkish and Persian authorities. If, however, Sattar Khan and Baghir Khan desired voluntarily to leave Persia, the Russian authorities were ready to offer them every facility for doing so. On a previous occasion, owing to a Russian sentry having been wounded by some unknown person, the general took drastic measures by inflicting a heavy fine on the town and exacting a general disarmament, while he increased the patrols in the town and demolished all barricades. The Russian Ministry for Foreign Affairs were somewhat dismayed by

these proceedings, and confessed confidentially that some friction had arisen between it and the Caucasian and military authorities. The Prime Minister had to be called in to settle the matter, and orders were sent that the general should remain content with the portion of the fine which had been paid and should generally moderate his attitude.

The Russian Government had for some time professed anxiety as to the Resht-Tehran road, and their concern was increased when the Nationalists took possession of Resht. M. Isvolsky caused the consular guard at Resht to be increased, but he was frequently alluding to the danger which would arise if the road were cut, and Tehran left *en l'air*. The Russian Government evinced little anxiety as to any serious danger being threatened by Persian Nationalists or revolutionaries, but they knew that, as in the case of Tabreez, many desperate characters had passed over from the Caucasus and had joined the Nationalist forces. Measures were taken by coastguard-ships at Enzeli to check the influx of these Caucasians, but it was evident that it was not difficult for many to elude the control. A force had been collected at Baku in the spring to be ready for any emergencies, and when in June the Nationalists advanced from Resht to Kazvin, and the Bakhtiaris commenced to move on to Tehran from Ispahan, the Russian Government considered that it would be perilous to foreigners in the capital if preparations were not made for dispatching a force of some 1,500 men to Kazvin. On the 5th July Count Benckendorff communicated a memorandum announcing that it had been decided to send to Enzeli a detachment composed of a Cossack regiment, a battalion of infantry, and a battery which was not to advance further than Kazvin. Any further advance was not to be undertaken except by the direction of the Russian legation in Tehran. The commander of the detachment would receive categorical instructions that the troops were to keep open the road to Enzeli, but were not to interfere in any way in the political struggles in Persia or in the internal affairs of the country. Their sole duty was to protect the legations and the Russian and foreign subjects and institutions. The Russian troops would only remain in Persia until there was no longer any danger to the foreign representatives or to Russian and foreign subjects. The reasons for the despatch of the force were that the efforts of the two legations to stop the advance of the Bakhtiaris, of the Resht and Kazvin revolutionaries and of the Caucasian adventurers under the Sipahdar had proved fruitless; and that their entry into the capital might expose foreigners to great dangers, especially as the Cossack brigade was too weak to preserve order. His Majesty's Government regarded with some apprehension the results of despatching a Russian contingent to Kazvin, and their views were laid before the Russian Embassy in London and the Russian Ministry in St. Petersburg. M. Isvolsky, however, considered that he could not disregard the reports as to the critical situation in Tehran, and the contingent consequently embarked for Enzeli. The necessity of the Russian force advancing from Kazvin to Tehran did not fortunately arise owing to the deposition of the Shah and the absence of any disorders or of danger to Europeans; and His Majesty's Government fully recognised the moderation and self-restraint exhibited by the Russian Government in not pushing forward the detachment further than Kazvin.

Certain reductions were from time to time made in the Russian forces at Tabreez, and towards the end of October the detachment had been reduced to about 900 men. His Majesty's Government, so far as was possible, were continually urging the Russian Government to withdraw the troops entirely, basing their arguments on the fact that order had practically been re-established and that a Persian governor-general had been appointed. The complete withdrawal was not, however, obtained, as the Russian Government considered that the Persian governor was not sufficiently well supplied with material force to support his authority and to maintain order. The British Government also pointed out in a friendly way to the Russian Government that the continued presence of Russian troops was creating a strong feeling against Russia throughout Persia. The representations of His Majesty's Government were of a perfectly friendly character, and full acknowledgment

was made of the important interests which Russia had in northern Persia and of the valid reasons which, in the first instance, had led to the dispatch of the troops. The retention of the detachment at Kazvin seemed less necessary even than that of the force at Tabreez; but the Russian Government were disinclined to make any reduction whatever in the force at the former place. They asserted, and personally I believe with sincerity, that they had no desire to retain any troops in Persia at all. Their presence brought no advantage whatever to Russia, and entailed a considerable expense. But in the first place they considered that the situation at the capital, since the deposition of the Shah, was by no means so secure as to justify the withdrawal of all troops. Moreover, the new Government in Persia, in the view of the Russian Government, had shown an unfriendly spirit and had endeavoured to inflict on Russia several irritating and petty annoyances; and until this attitude underwent a change the Russian Government were not inclined to take the feelings of the Persians into kindly consideration. It may be noted that although the two Governments did not see quite eye to eye in the question of the dispatch and of the retention of the troops, their divergence of opinion did not in the slightest affect their close co-operation in treating of Persian affairs in general.

At the end of October the Russian Government decided to withdraw the bulk of their troops from Kazvin, leaving only sixty or seventy Cossacks there and other detachments at Resht and Enzeli, but the total force would not exceed a regiment of Cossacks. The Russian Minister was instructed to inform the Persian Government of this step, and to point out that it was a sign of the good-will of Russia towards their country; but at the same time he was to warn them that if any untoward event occurred the Russians would return in greater force and with more serious intent. He was also at the same time, but without connecting the two questions, to endeavour to induce the Persian Government to take the opportunity of settling outstanding questions between the two Governments. M. Isvolsky expressed the hope that the British Minister would be instructed to advise the Persian Government to be amenable and conciliatory, and His Majesty's Government readily agreed to instruct Sir G. Barclay in that sense. The situation at Ardebil about this time became more disquieting, and Rahim Khan, with the Shehsevens and other brigands, were closely investing the place. The Russian consulate and Russian subjects were in some danger, as the Persians in the town, under Sattar Khan, were powerless to afford any protection. In fact, Sattar Khan took an early occasion of flying from the town and of escaping to Tabreez. The Russian Government immediately ordered detachments of Russian troops to be hastened from the Caucasus to protect Russian interests, and M. Isvolsky, in communicating this intelligence and explaining the imperative need that succour should speedily reach Ardebil, stated that the above measures would not affect the decision of the Russian Government to withdraw their troops from Kazvin. This laudable intention on the part of the Cabinet of St. Petersburg was not, however, carried into effect—and for two reasons. In the first place, when Rahim Khan had occupied Ardebil he announced that he proposed to march on Tehran; and, secondly, the Russian press protested against a too hasty withdrawal of Russian troops. The Russian journals, taking Ardebil as an instance, argued that the situation in Persia was exceedingly precarious and uncertain, and that in localities where there were no Russian troops order did not exist. They criticised the marching and counter-marching of Russian troops, which they considered indicated a vacillating policy, and some papers adjured the Russian Ministry to consider solely Russian interests and not to give too ready an ear to the advice of their English friends. The withdrawal from Kazvin was therefore countermanded, and shortly a considerable Russian force assembled at Ardebil. Soon afterwards the Shahsevens dispersed to their winter quarters, and Rahim Khan went to Karadagh. A Persian garrison arrived, and in December the bulk of the Russian forces was withdrawn. Certain reductions were also made in the Russian forces at Kazvin.

Some comment, though less than might have been expected, was caused by

a passage in the Speech from the Throne on the opening of the Persian Medjliss which lamented the presence of foreign troops in Persia. This allusion was considered by the Russian press to be both improper and ungenerous, as it was pointed out that Russian troops had saved Tabreez from falling into the hands of the forces of the Shah, and that the despatch of troops to Kazvin had preserved a sense of security during the events which took place previous to the dethronement of Mohamed Ali. Moreover, it was again reiterated that, as the Persians of themselves were incompetent to maintain order, what security did exist on trade routes was solely due to Russian troops. The serious attack of the 24th November on the Russian consul-general and his staff and caravan near Shiraz, when lives were lost and plunder occurred, was cited as undoubted confirmation of the reasoning of the Russian press.

(C.)—*Deposition of the Shah.*

The circumstances which led to the dethronement of the Shah, his taking refuge in the Russian Legation, and his eventual departure for Russia naturally do not come within the scope of this report. I would merely mention that in this question the two Governments acted throughout with complete accord. M. Isvolsky, on receipt of the news that the Shah had taken refuge at the Russian Legation, rightly regarded it as equivalent to his abdication, and he informed Mr. O'Beirne that the intelligence came to him as a relief. He added that Russia had had no desire to support Mohamed Ali, but she had been suspected of such a desire and wrong constructions had been put upon her actions. It is true that on more than one occasion M. Isvolsky informed this embassy that it was a matter of indifference to Russia who sat on the Persian throne so long as order could be maintained, but he had feared that if the Shah disappeared there was no one to put in his place and that a reign of anarchy would ensue. The moderation and good sense shown by the popular leaders in the first moment of victory somewhat reassured M. Isvolsky for the time, and he stated to Mr. O'Beirne that the Russian Government would await events, and see whether those who had now obtained control of affairs in Tehran were able to maintain order and establish a stable Government. Russia would intimate to whatever Government was set up in Persia that she would recognise them if they showed that they were capable of establishing order, but if they were incapable of so doing Russia would herself take the measures necessary for the protection of her interests. M. Isvolsky made no difficulty in recognising the new Shah in conjunction with His Majesty's Government. The ex-Shah arrived at Odessa in October, where a house was provided for him by the Russian Government. The doubts as to the stability of the new régime have, however, by no means been removed from the minds of the Russian Government.

A private telegraphic correspondence which passed between the Shah and the Emperor of Russia may perhaps be recorded. M. Tcharykoff was authorised by the Emperor to communicate the substance to the British Embassy. On the 2nd May the Shah telegraphed that he was about to proclaim his intention of convoking an assembly, and that he was reorganising his Ministry and calling together certain personages to elaborate an electoral law without delay. The Shah announced his intention of following the friendly advice which had been given to him by the Russian Government, and stated that he would send a private and personal message through the Russian chargé d'affaires. The Emperor had waited a few days for this message, but, as none came, His Majesty telegraphed on the 11th May to express his satisfaction with the measures which the Shah was taking to introduce a liberal régime, and wishing him every success in his praiseworthy intention. On the 12th May the Shah telegraphed announcing the measures which had already been taken, and asking that the Emperor would extend protection to him, his family, and his country. The Emperor replied on the following day, reiterating his satisfaction at the course which the Shah was adopting, and stating that the Shah could rely on his benevolent friendship and full support. The Emperor expressly avoided

employing the word protection. The guarantee which was given to the Shah was contained in the following assurances: That as long as His Majesty fulfilled sincerely the rôle of constitutional Sovereign he would have the support and sympathy of the two representatives of Russia and Great Britain, and the two representatives would, in case of necessity, and, should he seek it, afford him protection for his person. The two representatives were, however, persuaded that the best guarantees against the danger foreseen by His Majesty would be the re-establishment of a constitutional régime and his sincere co-operation for its good working. . . .

(E.)—*Russian Officers in Persian Service.*

The position of the Russian officers in the Persian service was a somewhat anomalous one, and the inconveniences attaching to it were clearly made manifest on several occasions during the crisis in Persia. The Russian Government sought to evade the difficulty in a measure by removing all the officers in the Cossack Brigade from the active list of the army, but so far as could be gathered this measure did not, in the eyes of the general public, divest them of all connection with their own superiors. Colonel Liakhoff was recalled during the course of the year from service in Persia, and has since been given the command of a regiment in Russia; but he was still in command of the brigade at the moment that the popular forces marched on Tehran. His attitude on that occasion will doubtless be reported in the annual report on Persia, and Count Benckendorff on the 26th June communicated a memorandum to His Majesty's Government in regard to the attitude which the Russian officers might be compelled to adopt, and referred to the instructions which had been despatched for their guidance.⁽⁹⁾ Count Benckendorff explained that, as the Shah had complied with the advice of the British and Russian Governments, and the establishment of a representative Government might be regarded as a fact, the advance of the fedais and of the Bakhtiaris on Tehran was an act of hostility against the constitution and the rights of the Government of the Shah. The Russian officers were bound in duty to safeguard the Shah and his family, assurances for his personal security had recently been renewed by the two representatives, and as he had fulfilled his promises he had a right to count on their protection. As the Russian officers were no longer in the active service of the Russian army they were therefore more closely subordinated to the Shah than heretofore, and therefore in case of an attack upon Tehran they were not to give up the leadership of the brigade. The question of finding a successor to Colonel Liakhoff came up in May, and M. Tcharykoff informed the embassy that Colonel Margani had been selected to command the Cossack Brigade. This officer was considered by M. Tcharykoff as eminently qualified for the post, as he had had great experience with Mussulman races, and was, as M. Tcharykoff expressed it, half an Oriental himself. In reply to an enquiry, M. Tcharykoff stated that Colonel Margani would remain on the active list of the Russian army. He explained that when Colonel Liakhoff and the other officers had been removed from the active list the Shah had made great complaints on the subject; and he had had some justification in protesting, as by the convention which regulated the status of the Russian officers in the Persian service the latter were to remain on the active list. In the Russian army there was no system of half-pay or seconding, and an officer must be either on the active or on the retired list. The position of the other Russian officers would, however, not be altered, and they would not be restored to the active list. A few days later M. Tcharykoff announced that Colonel Margani would not take up his appointment, as the General Staff had raised objections on the ground that he did not possess the requisite scientific attainments. The General Staff said that they would eventually select an officer themselves.

(9) [The communication was in the form of a telegram from M. Isvolski to Count Benckendorff. A minute by Sir Edward Grey records that when he saw Count Benckendorff a few days later he "did not refer to the question." (F.O. 371/809 23967/Case 2/09/34.)]

(F.)—*Turkish Action in Persia.*

The action of Turkey in Persia, both diplomatic and military, was of a nature to engage the serious attention of the Russian Government. During 1908 the movements of Turkish troops beyond the zone within which the frontier line is eventually to be drawn led to representations being made at Constantinople, and apparently when the new régime came into power some measures were taken, or in any case were promised, in regard to the withdrawal of these forces. Whatever might have occurred in that respect, the disordered conditions into which the Urumia district were plunged in the early part of 1909 encouraged or compelled the Turks to make further advances. News as to what was actually occurring was scanty and intermittent, owing to the almost complete interruption of communications, but sufficient intelligence reached the outside world to awaken the Russian Government to the necessity of dispatching a reinforcement to their consular guard at Urumia. Moreover, information reached St. Petersburg in regard to Turkish movements which was considered of importance, and in regard to which Count Benckendorff addressed a memorandum to His Majesty's Government on the 8th July. In this memorandum it was stated that the Turks were sending troops in ever-increasing numbers to the Urumia district, were occupying villages which were unquestionably Persian, and, taking advantage of the violences committed by the Kurds, were inducing the population to ask for Turkish nationality. The memorandum also referred to the proposal which had been made by the Turkish Ambassador at St. Petersburg to the effect that the Russian Government should withdraw their consular guard from Urumia and permit Turkish troops to take its place. This proposal, it was considered, made it abundantly clear that the action taken by the Turkish troops was well known by the Ottoman Government. The memorandum alluded to the fact that the Anglo-Russian convention of 1907 recognised the integrity of Persia, and it also referred to the strategical importance of the Urumia district in regard to the Russian frontier. The Russian Government, in view of the above considerations, proposed that a joint protest should be made at Constantinople requesting the recall of the troops, and that instructions should be sent to the Turkish consuls in the Urumia district to abstain from interfering in Persian affairs and from according Turkish nationality to the local population. His Majesty's Government expressed their concurrence, and sent instructions to His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople to co-operate with his Russian colleague.⁽¹⁰⁾ Sir G. Lowther reported that the communication which accordingly was made to the Sublime Porte had made a considerable impression, and that the Ottoman Government had declared that they had no desire to do more than protect their own subjects, and they disclaimed any intention of seeking territorial aggrandisement in Persia. They further stated that a commission would be dispatched to inquire into the alleged irregularities and to withdraw Ottoman protection where it was found to have been improperly given. They added that the Ottoman consul in Urumia would be changed. It does not appear that the troops have been withdrawn, and it would seem that the Turkish Government will make their withdrawal dependent on the evacuation of Persia by Russian troops. The activity of the Turkish Embassy at Tehran and of the Turkish consul-general at Tabreez during the critical periods of the Persian revolution inspired the Russian Government with considerable mistrust, and it was thought that means were being employed to excite the popular feeling against Russia. The Russian Government have little doubt that the popular movement in Persia was much encouraged by the Committee of Union and Progress, and on certain points there was a similarity in the proceedings at Tehran with what had occurred at Constantinople.

⁽¹⁰⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 395) to Sir G. Lowther of July 8, 1909, D. 5-50 P.M., gave a summary of Count Benckendorff's memorandum and instructions to co-operate (F.O. 371/710. 25800/228/09/34)]

(G.)—*Telegraphs.*

On the 23rd January His Majesty's Embassy addressed a memorandum to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs on the general question of Persian telegraphs. . . .

Throughout these telegraph negotiations the Russian Government showed an extremely conciliatory and friendly spirit, and readily fell in with all the wishes of His Majesty's Government. There was no trace of any doubts that the question in which the Russian Government showed great interest, the exchange of the two telegraph lines, was being put on one side in order to enable arrangement of more immediate moment to British interests being successfully carried through. I think that the attitude of the Russian Government was exceedingly creditable to them; and it is to be sincerely regretted that the moment has not been opportune for effecting the exchange of the two telegraph lines. This matter forms an important corollary to the Anglo-Russian convention as regards Persia, as I submit that it is of importance to remove, if possible, Russian interests of all kinds from the British sphere. If the telegraph administration were transferred, there is a probability that banking interests would also migrate. At present there may not be any serious inconvenience in the telegraph administration in Seistan being in Russian hands, but it would not be safe to rely upon the good feeling at present happily existing between the two Governments being of permanent duration, and it would, in my humble opinion, be of advantage to carry into effect, at the earliest favourable opportunity, the arrangement which the two Governments made in 1907 for the transference of the two telegraph lines.

No. 747.

Extract from the Annual Report for Russia for the Year 1910.

(Enclosure in Despatch from Sir G. Buchanan (No. 66) of March 22, 1911,
R. March 27, 1911.)⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1214.
11045/11045/11/38.

Persian Affairs.

The year 1910 was marked by an increase of ill-feeling in Persia against Russia, and by increasing difficulties between the Persian and Russian Governments. The continued presence of Russian detachments at Kasvin, Tabreez, and Ardebil was a constant source of friction. Early in February there was a debate on the subject in the Medjliss which led to the fall of the Persian Foreign Minister. His Majesty's Government, while refraining from addressing any protest to the Russian Government, continually urged upon them, in a friendly way, the advisability of a withdrawal at any rate of the Kasvin force. The Russian Government declared with apparent sincerity that they were anxious to effect the withdrawal, but that the attitude of the Persian Government towards Russia, the growing anti-Russian agitation conducted in Persia, and constantly recurring incidents in which Russian subjects were concerned, made it difficult to carry out their intention. Towards the end of May the Russian Minister at Tehran suggested that certain conditions should be attached to the withdrawal of the force from Kasvin. These conditions were subsequently communicated to the Persian Government. They were: the extension of the Russian mining concession at Karadagh, an automobile concession for the

⁽¹⁾ [Sir G. Buchanan states that the report was written by Mr. O'Beirne who was *Chargé d'Affaires* from August 14 to December 9, 1910.]

Enzeli-Tehran road, and certain requirements relating to the status of the Cossack brigade. The imposition of these conditions was strongly complained of by the Persian Government. It was obviously illogical, since Russia had undertaken to withdraw her forces on the restoration of order; but it must be said that the conditions in themselves were not very onerous. The negotiations between the Russian and Persian Governments had not led to their acceptance by the end of the year, and the withdrawal had not commenced.

The action of the Russian troops in Azerbaijan was confined on the whole to patrolling trade routes, escorting caravans, &c. The Persian Government complained that a reconnaissance made by a Russian detachment in January to Ahar was calculated to lend support to a rebellious chief named Rahim Khan, but the detachment was soon withdrawn, and Rahim Khan was defeated and fled into Russian territory. Russia declined to extradite him, and declared that the plunder which he had carried with him must be recovered through the Russian courts.

At the close of the year 1909, His Majesty's Government had formed the opinion that it was urgent to comply with the request which had been made by the Persian Government for an advance of money in order to enable it to establish its authority and restore order. They accordingly proposed to the Russian Government, on the 26th December, 1909, that the two Governments should make a joint advance of 400,000*l*. The Russian Government showed much reluctance to agree to this course. They considered that the advance should be made only in connection with a larger loan, and they were at first not prepared to advance more than 100,000*l*.; ultimately they agreed to advance their moiety of the full amount (400,000*l*.) proposed. At the suggestion of His Majesty's Government it was decided to take the opportunity of imposing certain conditions on the Persian Government. The two representatives informed the latter, on the 18th February, that the British and Russian Governments were prepared to make a joint advance of 400,000*l*., to be devoted to the re-establishment of order in the country and the introduction of certain pressing reforms in the administration, subject to six stipulations which may be summarised as follows:—

The Persian Government were to present a detailed programme of expenditure, to be approved by the two legations and to be controlled by a commission composed of the financial adviser, the administrator of customs, two members of the Medjliss, and two other Persians.

The programme must provide for the appointment of seven French officials in the Ministry of Finance, with executive powers.

It must also provide for a sufficient gendarmerie for the protection of the trade routes, with foreign instructors.

Persia must grant no railway concessions without previously offering the option to the two Governments. The latter would not exercise their option in the case of a genuine concession to a Persian.

The concession for the navigation on Lake Urumia to be given to the Tabreez Road Company.

The repayment of the advance to be a first charge on a subsequent loan, if such a loan was facilitated by the British and Russian Governments.

The conditions thus attached to the proposed advance had the result that the Persian Government declined to take advantage of the offer of money made to them. A strong agitation against the acceptance of the conditions was set on foot in the Medjliss, and the Persian Prime Minister informed the Oriental Secretary of the British Legation, on the 17th March, that it would be useless to submit them to that body.⁽²⁾

(2) [The joint note of February 16, 1910, was transmitted as an enclosure in Sir G. Barclay's despatch (No. 22), D. February 16, R. March 14, 1910. The Persian reply was reported in Sir G. Barclay's telegram (No. 119) of March 17, 1910, D. 8-40 P.M., R. 7-15 P.M. (F.O. 371/947. 8672/124/10/34. 9337/124/10/34.)]

Although it was decided by the two Governments not to give publicity for the time being to the proposals made to the Persian Government, their tenour naturally leaked out in a more or less incorrect form, and Germany lost no time in taking diplomatic action. The German Ambassador in London informed Sir E. Grey on the 7th March that Germany had commercial interests in Persia. She asked that German claims against the Persian Government should be paid off out of the intended loan. If Persia employed subjects of neutral Powers other than Russia and England, German subjects should equally be employed.⁽³⁾ To the Russian Government a decidedly stiffer communication was made, at first verbally by Count Pourtalès and afterwards in writing. The difference in tone assumed by Germany in dealing with the two countries appeared indeed to be intended, as was pointed out by Sir A. Nicolson, to bring about a cleavage between the co-signatories of the Anglo-Russian agreement. The German *aide-mémoire* to Russia, dated the 27th February, declared that Germany had the right to settle questions, which interested her in Persia, without consulting the interests of third Powers. Germany not having participated in the Anglo-Russian agreement, that arrangement made for her no change in the situation of Persia. The *aide-mémoire* further reproached Russia with the break-off of the negotiations, which had taken place in 1907, in connection with the Bagdad Railway question, complained of the intended employment by Persia of French financial advisers, and intimated that an agent of the Deutsche Bank was being sent to Persia, travelling *viâ* Khanikin and Bagdad. It added that Germany would decline to negotiate concerning the Bagdad Railway *à quatre*.⁽⁴⁾

M. Isvolsky considered that Germany's main object was to bring Russia to renew negotiations with her single-handed, on the Bagdad Railway question. After consulting with Sir E. Grey, he handed a memorandum to the German Ambassador, maintaining that Russia and England were specially interested in Persian financial reform, and also pointing out that Persia had applied of her own initiative for Frenchmen as assistants to the financial adviser. The memorandum suggested that such officials, if not Russian or English, might be chosen from among the subjects of minor Powers. As regards the Bagdad Railway, Russia, while favouring negotiations *à quatre* on the general question, was willing to resume *pourparlers* with Germany, on the "special basis laid down in 1907."

On the 21st March, Count Metternich gave to Sir E. Grey a version which the German Government had received of the conditions which the two powers had attached to the proposed advance to the Persian Government. According to this version the building of a railway in Persia was prohibited without Anglo-Russian consent; concessions were to be granted only to Russian and British subjects in the Russian and British spheres respectively, and Persians could receive concessions, only on condition that they had no foreign capital behind them. The Ambassador said that such conditions were, in the opinion of the German Government, contrary to the Anglo-Russian agreement, and to the assurances given to other Powers, respecting freedom of trade. They would render Persian independence illusory. The Austrian Ambassador made a similar communication to Sir E. Grey on the following day, and the Italian *chargé d'affaires* enquired shortly afterwards whether the conditions implied an Anglo-Russian monopoly of concessions in the respective spheres. It appeared, in fact, that Germany had organised a joint demonstration by the Powers of the Triple Alliance, although this was afterwards stoutly denied by Germany. Sir E. Grey, on the 22nd March, gave to the German Ambassador

⁽³⁾ [*cp. G.P.*, XXVII (II), pp. 755-7. Sir Edward Grey's despatch (No. 55) of March 7, 1910, informed Sir E. Goschen of this conversation. (F O. 371/955. 8445/8445/10/34.)]

⁽⁴⁾ [*cp. G.P.*, XXVII (II), pp. 753-4; pp. 757-9. The communication was made on February 27/March 12. The text was transmitted as an enclosure in Sir A. Nicolson's despatch (No. 144), D. March 21, R. March 29, 1910. (F O. 371/955. 10422/8445/10/34.) M. Isvolski's reply, dated March 10/23, is given in *G.P.*, XXVII (II), pp. 765-6. For the Russo-German negotiations of 1907 *cp. supra*, p. 603, No. 638, and *note* (2); p. 607, No. 642, and *note* (4); p. 650, No. 678, and *note* (3).]

verbally an abridged summary of the conditions which had really been put forward, adding some explanations of a tranquillising nature.⁽⁵⁾ Notwithstanding these explanations, language was held towards the end of March, by Herr von Schoen, to the Russian chargé d'affaires at Berlin, and shortly afterwards by the German Ambassador to M. Isvolsky, which seemed to indicate an increasing obstinacy in the German attitude. The German Government observed that they had a perfect right to seek for concessions in Persia, and that they might obtain a railway concession at any moment. If Russia was willing to renew negotiations, so was Germany. On the 25th April, Sir E. Goschen had a conversation with the German Chancellor, in which Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg said that Germany claimed freedom of action in Persia, though willing to raise no objection to British concessions in the British sphere, provided Germany participated in such concessions. Referring to this conversation shortly afterwards, the Russian Emperor expressed to Sir A. Nicolson his determination to co-operate in the closest manner with Great Britain; and on the 29th April M. Isvolsky proposed energetic pressure on the Persian Government in the matter of concessions.⁽⁶⁾

Somewhat unexpectedly there came a complete change in the tone of the German Government, which was first clearly shown when M. Isvolsky passed through Berlin and visited Baron von Schoen on the 6th May.⁽⁷⁾ Russia and England had in the meantime (see below) presented a joint note dated the 7th April to the Persian Government stating the conditions subject to which they recognised Persia's right to borrow money otherwise than from themselves.⁽⁸⁾ The note added a warning to the effect that they could not allow concessions to be given to subjects of other Powers which could prejudice their own political or strategic interests in Persia. Baron von Schoen now gave to M. Isvolsky an assurance that the German Government would forbid the acceptance by Germans of any concessions which might be disagreeable to England or Russia. He hoped, on the other hand, that the two Powers would not press the Persian Government for a formal declaration in the sense indicated in the joint note of the 7th April, which would, he said, make an unfortunate impression on German public opinion. The German Government, Baron von Schoen added, fully recognised the advisability of an understanding on Persian affairs. Germany at the same time conveyed to Great Britain her readiness to come to an understanding. The German chargé d'affaires told Sir E. Grey on the 11th May that the Chancellor's idea was to recognise England's special position and sphere in Persia provided England agreed to the placing in Germany of orders for 25 per cent. of the materials of any Persian railways which she might contract.

The wishes of the German Government that no formal declaration respecting concessions should be exacted from the Persian Government were to some extent met. The Persian Government having enquired what was the precise meaning of the phrase "political and strategic interests" used in the joint note of the 7th April, the two representatives were instructed to reply that the two Powers expected that "before granting any concession for means of communication, telegraphs or harbours to a foreign subject, the Persian Government would enter into an exchange of views in order that the political or strategic interests of the two Powers might be duly safeguarded," and that any contravention of this principle would be regarded as

(5) [Sir Edward Grey's despatches (Nos. 64-5, No. 67) of March 21-2, 1910, informed Sir E. Goschen of these conversations with Count Metternich. (F.O. 371/955 9876-7/8445/10/34. 10070/8445/10/34.)]

(6) [No record can be traced of a conversation between Sir E. Goschen and Herr von Bethmann Hollweg on the subject of Persia on April 25, 1910. The reference should probably be to the conversation of April 10, *cp. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. VI, pp. 454-9, No. 344, and *encl.* On April 15 the Emperor Nicholas II expressed to Sir A. Nicolson the views recorded above. *v. ibid.*, pp. 465-6, No. 349. M. Isvolski's proposal of "energetic pressure" was made in a communication by Count Benckendorff on April 29. The communication was dated April 25. (F.O. 371/954. 14696/8172/10/34.)]

(7) [*cp. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. VI, pp. 479-81, Nos. 362-3; pp. 486-7, No. 371.]

(8) [*cp. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. VI, p. 452, No. 343, note (2). *cp. also supra*, p. 551, No. 599, *min.*, and note (4).]

an unfriendly act. The Persian Government were not invited to return any answer to this communication, and its presentation by the two representatives did not call forth any fresh protest from Germany.

Thus the intervention of Germany in the matter of concessions had, it will be seen, served the cause of the Anglo-Russian *Entente* by bringing the two Powers into the closest co-operation with one another. They also co-operated completely, though without any satisfactory result, in the matter of Turkish encroachments on the Persian frontier (see "Russia and Turkey"),⁽⁹⁾ and in a general way the harmonious working of the *entente* in Persia was most successfully maintained throughout the year. It was at the same time inevitable that circumstances should occasionally arise to produce passing differences of opinion between the partners in the understanding. In September the Persian Medjliss had decided in favour of engaging a French assistant for the Ministry of Justice and several Italian instructors for the gendarmerie, in addition to American advisers for the Finance Department. The two Powers agreed to instruct their Ministers to make representations to the Persian Government designed to dissuade them from engaging any subjects of a European Great Power. But M. Sazonow, in a conversation with me on the 14th September, expressed the opinion that the time had now come to threaten the Persian Government with energetic measures, if they did not alter their generally refractory attitude in regard not only to the question of foreign advisers, but to various other questions such as the conversion of the Russian Bank debt, the satisfaction demanded for attacks on British and Russian consular officers, and the conditions attached by Russia to the withdrawal of the Kazvin force. Among the means of pressure suggested by M. Sazonow were threats to seize the customs, to increase the Russian forces, to suspend the transit of military stores for Persia through the Caucasus, &c. His Majesty's Government strongly deprecated the course proposed, considering that it would not be likely to result in the formation of a more conciliatory Persian Cabinet, and fearing that it might lead to an occupation of North Persia; and in deference to their opinion M. Sazonow reluctantly abandoned the idea of joint pressure by the two Governments, though he intimated that the Russian Government might use pressure on its own account. Shortly afterwards (the 26th September) the two representatives at Tehran reported that a pronounced divergence of opinion had arisen between them with regard to the attitude to be observed towards the Persian Cabinet. While M. Poklewsky desired to bring about its downfall as being intractable and incapable, Sir G. Barclay thought that there was no prospect of its being replaced by one less extremely nationalist. His Majesty's Government instructed the British Minister not to allow any divergence of views with his Russian colleague to assume undue proportions, and to give his active support to the demands made by Russia as conditions for the withdrawal of the Russian troops, even if the joint pressure of the two representatives should endanger the existence of the then existing Persian Cabinet. On the other hand, the Russian Minister was instructed strongly to support the British representations with regard to the insecurity of the southern roads, and the British proposals for the creation, if necessary, of a special force under Indian officers for the policing of the roads.

Another subject which at one moment seemed to threaten a serious difference of opinion between the two Powers was a proposed loan to the Persian Government by the Imperial Bank of Persia. After the offer by the two Governments of an advance of 400,000*l.* had been made and in effect declined by the Persian Government in the manner described above, various private firms came forward with proposals of loans to Persia. Among these were the International Syndicate, Seligman Brothers, a syndicate of French banks, Messrs. Boulton, the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, and others. The two Powers had informed the Persian Government,

⁽⁹⁾ [The reference is to another section of this *Annual Report* where Russo-Turkish relations are reviewed in detail.]

by the joint note of the 7th April already referred to, that they recognised Persia's right to borrow money from outside quarters, provided (1) that the sources of revenue already pledged as security for the British and Russian loans were not made security for the new loans, and (2) that the debts due to the British and Russian Governments were previously consolidated. The debts due to the Imperial Bank had been converted to a 7 per cent. basis by an agreement with the Persian Government dated the 26th May; but the negotiations for the conversion of the debts due to the Russian Banque d'Escompte et de Prêts hung fire for a considerable time. They were not in fact concluded until January 1911. Early in October 1910 the Imperial Bank were notified by the Persian Government that the latter proposed to pay off the Imperial Bank's debt in full by means of a 5 per cent. loan to be issued by Seligman Brothers. Had this transaction been carried out, the position of the Imperial Bank in Persia would have been undermined, and the lien held by them on the Southern Customs would have passed into the hands of Messrs. Seligman. The bank now offered to issue a 5 per cent. loan on behalf of the Persian Government to the amount of 1,250,000*l.* on terms as favourable as those proposed by Seligmans'. The Russian Government feared that the immediate conclusion of such a loan would prejudice their conversion negotiations; the Imperial Bank maintained on their side that it was urgent to sign the loan contract without delay in order to prevent the transaction falling into the hands of Messrs. Seligman. For political reasons His Majesty's Government did not see their way to opposing the signature of the contract, and they so informed the Russian Government. M. Sazonow at one time displayed considerable irritation; he stated to me on the 15th November that the conclusion of the transaction "would produce a very unfavourable impression here," and even that it "would make it out of the question to withdraw the Kazvin force." Subsequently, however, he appeared to be fairly satisfied with the explanations given to him by His Majesty's Government. The loan contract was signed and submitted to the Medjliss, but had not been ratified by the close of the year.

In the early portion of November the chief of police at Kashan, in search of an offender, broke into the house of the Russian consular agent (a Persian subject). The Russian Minister demanded the dismissal of the police officer and a formal personal apology from the Persian Minister of Foreign Affairs, as well as an apology from two Bakhtiari chiefs, on the ground that some Bakhtiaris had taken part in the proceedings. In the event of non-compliance he proposed to his Government to take "energetic measures," and the Russian Government at one moment contemplated seizing certain northern custom-houses. After some hesitation the Persian Minister of Foreign Affairs made a personal apology, which closed the incident. Sir George Barclay used his influence with the Persian Government to induce them to satisfy the Russian requirements.

Transpersian Railway.

In July M. Isvolsky communicated unofficially to Sir A. Nicolson a memorandum outlining a scheme promoted by an influential group of Russians for the construction of a railway across Persia viâ Baku-Tehran-Kerman to connect with the Indian railway system. The original scheme contemplated the construction of the railway mainly by British and Russian capital, with French and possibly also Persian participation; though the promoters later suggested that the line should be internationalised. M. Sazonow some time afterwards expressed himself to me warmly in favour of the scheme, which he regarded as the best counter-move to the Bagdad Railway. It was also supported by M. Stolypin and M. Kokovtseff. When, however, it became publicly known in Russia it at once evoked strong opposition in certain commercial circles, chiefly on the ground that the proposed railway would serve to bring European goods to compete with Russian goods in the North Persian markets. A meeting of Moscow merchants held in November protested against the scheme. Sir E. Grey informed the Russian Ambassador on the 15th December that he was

personally in favour of it, but that he could not commit His Majesty's Government to it for the present; and he remarked that the strategic aspect of the project must be carefully gone into.⁽¹⁰⁾

(10) [*v. supra*, pp 581-2, No 621]

II.—THE APPOINTMENT OF MR. SHUSTER.

[*ED. NOTE.*—For further reference to this subject, *v. A. & P.*, (1912), CXXII (*Cd.* 6104, 6105, 6264); *cp.* W Morgan Shuster: *The Strangling of Persia*, (London, 1912); Sir G. Buchanan: *My Mission to Russia* . . , (London, 1923), Vol. I, pp. 98-103; *Twenty-Fire Years*, Vol. I, pp. 168-9.]

No. 748.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1178.

St. Petersburg, January 1, 1911.

3/3/11/34A.

D. 8·6 P.M.

Tel. (No. 2.)

R. 9·50 P.M.

Minister for Foreign Affairs informed me yesterday that there was now every prospect of Russian conversion scheme being carried through⁽²⁾ and of question of motor-cars being settled. He might in that case be able to withdraw troops from Kazvin, threatening the Persian Government at the same time that, if prolongation of mining concession was refused, Russian Government might be obliged to have prospecting work carried out under the protection of small body of Cossacks.

He also told me that German Ambassador at Constantinople had made representations respecting the Persian frontier question, warning Ottoman Government of the danger of provoking Russian Government by persistence in their present attitude. Ottoman Government had replied by repeating their usual mendacious statements of the facts of the case.

His Excellency expressed the hope that, should he eventually decide to take any action at Constantinople, His Majesty's Government would support him. I replied that withdrawal of troops from Kazvin would greatly strengthen our position and that I did not doubt that you would then gladly co-operate with Russian Government.

(Sent to Tehran.)

MINUTES.

This is more hopeful.

The completion of the conversion scheme and the withdrawal of the Russian troops from Kazvin would be an enormous gain.

The Germans are anxious to be agreeable to Russia and are showing it at Constantinople. We have consistently supported Russian representations there about the Turco-Persian frontier and would do so again. Sir G. Buchanan's language might be approved and he might

(1) [This telegram was sent to Constantinople (as No. 4). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

(2) [*v.* immediately preceding document, pp. 744-5.]

be told to give an assurance to that effect: also to express our satisfaction as to the conversion scheme and contemplated withdrawal of the Russian troops.

H. N.
Jan[uary] 2, 1911
R. P. M.

Approve.

L. M.

We could telegraph to Sir G. Buchanan as suggested.⁽³⁾

A. N.

⁽³⁾ [This telegram (No. 6) was sent on January 4, 1911. It was repeated to Constantinople (No. 3), to Tehran (No. 7). (F.O. 371/1178 3/3/11/34A.)]

No. 749.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1185.

1857/1857/11/34.

Tel. (No. 12.)

Foreign Office, January 16, 1911, 2 P.M.

We are informed confidentially that German M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] has told French Ambassador at Berlin that German Gov[ernmen]t have no objection to French Gov[ernmen]t supplying advisers to Persian Gov[ernmen]t for Ministry of Interior and of Justice. German M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] added that he anticipated that the German Gov[ernmen]t would shortly be approached for an adviser for some other Ministry.

You should inform M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] of this very confidentially and ask what line he proposes to take. It would be difficult to prohibit Persian Gov[ernmen]t from applying for foreign advisers but I think we must insist that if they get advisers from other Great Powers they must also take some from England and Russia.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Tehran (No. 13). It was based upon Sir A. Nicolson's record of his conversation with M. Paul Cambon on January 13.]

No. 750.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1179.

1630/51/11/34.

Tel. (No. 13.)

Foreign Office, January 16, 1911, 6.10 P.M.

Sir G. Barclay's tel[egram] No. 14 [of January 14].⁽²⁾

Express to M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] my satisfaction and congratulations at the conclusion of the conversion scheme. You should give him a hint that the moment seems opportune for the recall of the Kasvin troops.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Tehran (No. 14).]

⁽²⁾ [Sir G. Barclay's telegram (No. 14) of January 14, 1911, D. 8.25 P.M., R. 6 P.M., reported that the Russian conversion arrangement had been signed. It was sent to St. Petersburg (as No. 13); to Tehran (as No. 14). (F.O. 371/1179. 1630/51/11/34.)]

No. 751.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1185.
 1959/1857/11/34.
 Tel. (No. 17.)

Tehran, January 17, 1911.
 D. 1.50 P.M.
 R. 1.50 P.M.

Your tel[egram] to St. Petersburg No. 12.⁽²⁾

French Chargé d'Affaires tells me that French Gov[ernmen]t have decided on his insistent advice to refuse loan of two advisers. Sir G. Buchanan informed.

⁽¹⁾ [A copy of this telegram was sent to the India Office.]

⁽²⁾ [*v supra*, p. 747, No. 749.]

No. 752.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1185.
 1967/1857/11/34A.
 Tel. (No. 16.) Very Confidential.

St. Petersburg, January 17, 1911.
 D. 9 P.M.
 R. 10 P.M.

Your telegram No. 12.⁽²⁾

Minister for Foreign Affairs tells me that French Ambassador spoke to him about a week ago of the proposed appointment of French and German advisers, and that he had expressed apprehension that were the French Government to consent we should find a Russian⁽³⁾ colonel looming in the distance. French Ambassador had then been instructed to speak to German Minister for Foreign Affairs, who had said that if such a request were addressed to German Government they would reserve their full liberty of action.

Minister for Foreign Affairs thinks that now both French and Italian Governments have declined to lend such advisers it would be difficult for the German Government to do so, and that if application is made we might represent that none of the Great Powers is lending any. If Germany, however, consents to supply one, we must insist that British, French, Italian, and Russian advisers be also employed.

MINUTE.

The refusal of the French Gov[ernmen]t to supply advisers strengthens our position

H. N.
 Jan[uary] 18, 1911
 R. P. M.
 A. N.
 E. G.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Tehran (as No. 15); to Berlin; to Paris. A copy was sent to the India Office.]

⁽²⁾ [*v supra*, p. 747, No. 749.]

⁽³⁾ [Unsigned marginal note: "Prussian."]

No. 753.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1179.
 1968/51/11/34A.
 Tel. (No. 17.)

St. Petersburg, January 17, 1911.

D. 9 P.M.
 R. 10 P.M.

Russian conversion scheme.

I spoke to Minister for Foreign Affairs this afternoon in the sense of your telegram No. 13.⁽²⁾ His Excellency told me that the Emperor had approved his proposal to withdraw Russian troops from Kazvin at the first possible opportunity, and added that he had already telegraphed to Tehran inviting the views of the Russian Minister. I gather that announcement of withdrawal will be timed so as to greet Regent on his arrival in Persia.⁽³⁾

(Sent to Tehran.)

⁽¹⁾ [Copies of this telegram were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p 747, No 750.]

⁽³⁾ [The Regent Azad-ul-Mulk died in September 1910, and Nasr-ul-Mulk was elected in his place. He was absent from Persia at the time, and returned to Tehran on February 8, 1911.]

No. 754.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1179.
 2419/51/11/34.
 (No. 22.)
 Sir,

Foreign Office, January 17, 1911.

In conversation with Count Benckendorff to-day⁽²⁾ I expressed great satisfaction that the Russian conversion scheme had been signed at Tehran. It would produce a most favourable impression if the Russian Government were to take this opportunity to withdraw their troops from Kazvin. I knew the difficulty they had had in finding a good opportunity for doing this. But, now that the conversion was signed, and the Persian Foreign Minister to whom M. Poklevski had so strongly objected was gone, I hoped the opportunity might be taken.

Count Benckendorff promised to telegraph to his Government what I had said on this point.

[I am, &c.]
 E. G[REY].

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe; to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.]

⁽²⁾ [For further accounts of the conversation, *v. supra*, pp. 622-5, Nos. 653-4, and reference there to *Siebert*, pp. 536-9. The account in *Siebert* deals almost wholly with the Bagdad Railway.]

No. 755.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1185.

2420/1857/11/34.

(No. 25.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 18, 1911.

M. Cambon told me to-day, as he had told Sir Arthur Nicolson,⁽²⁾ what had passed with regard to French advisers for Persia; and explained that the French Government had put an end to the difficulty by declining to lend advisers.

I said that I had already informed Count Metternich that we had told the Persian Government that the best course for them would be to apply to minor Powers; for, if they applied to great Powers, we should have to insist upon the appointment of British advisers also, and Russia would of course do the same.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to Lord Cromwell.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 747, No. 749, and *note* ⁽¹⁾.]

No. 756.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1185.

2064/1857/11/31.

(No. 12.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 18, 1911.

Count Metternich informed me very confidentially that the French Gov[ernmen]t had informed the German Gov[ernmen]t that the Persian Gov[ernmen]t had applied for one French adviser for the Ministry of Interior and one for the Ministry of Justice. The French Gov[ernmen]t had made enquiry whether the German Gov[ernmen]t would object to these French advisers. The German Gov[ernmen]t had replied that they had no objection but that they expected that if a similar application was made for German Advisers the French Gov[ernmen]t would not object.

I thanked Count Metternich for this information. I had not heard that the French Gov[ernmen]t had taken this step.⁽²⁾

Some time ago we had pointed out to the Persian Gov[ernmen]t that if they took advisers from Great Powers we should expect some British Advisers to be taken and no doubt the Russians would expect the same. We had therefore expressed the opinion that it would be preferable for Persia to apply to Minor Powers.

I am, &c.

E. G[REY].

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch was repeated to St. Petersburg (No. 20); to Tehran (No. 95).]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 748, No. 752.]

No. 757.

Mr. Bryce to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1185.

3116/1857/11/34A.

Tel. (No. 10.)

Washington, January 26, 1911, 9.45 P.M.

Persia. Your despatch No. 291.⁽²⁾

Persian representative here has under instructions requested Secretary of State to help him in securing five financial advisers for Persian Government, and press reports that State Department will comply.

MINUTES.

If the Persians do this they will find themselves without a French adviser, in view of M. Bizot's opinion (36908/1910)⁽³⁾ but as we have decided that the selection of U[nited] S[tates] citizens would not give rise to political difficulties and therefore cannot be interfered with.

I do not see that we have any ground for action though the selection is probably unfortunate in the interests of Persia.

H. N.

Jan[uary] 27, 1911.

R. P. M.

L. M.

A. N.

I have told Count Benckendorff of this telegram. (See 3673)⁽⁴⁾

E. G.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Paris (as No. 9); to St. Petersburg (as No. 15); to Tehran (as No. 20).]

⁽²⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's despatch (No. 291) to Mr. Mitchell Innes of September 29, 1910, stated that Mr. Whitelaw Reid had been informed on September 22 that the Governments of Russia and Great Britain had recently agreed that since America was not a European Power the employment of Americans was not likely to cause political difficulties. (F.O. 371/963. 34930/29750/10/34.) *cp. Siebert*, pp. 96-7.]

⁽³⁾ [On October 11, 1910, M. Paul Cambon communicated a note stating that in M. Bizot's opinion the wide differences between French and American financial methods would make it difficult for a French and an American adviser to work together. (F.O. 371/963. 36908/29750/10/34.)]

⁽⁴⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's despatch (No. 33) to Sir G. Buchanan of January 27, 1911, stated that Count Benckendorff had been informed of this telegram. It added that as nothing had been heard from Sir G. Barclay it was "clear that the Persian Government were acting quite independently." (F.O. 371/1185. 3673/1857/11/34.)]

No. 758.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 371/1185.

5187/1857/11/34.

(No. 12.)

Tehran, D. January 26, 1911.

Sir,

R. February 13, 1911.

With reference to Sir G. Buchanan's telegram No. 16 of the 17th instant,⁽¹⁾ I have the honour to report that at interviews which we had yesterday with the Minister for Foreign Affairs my Russian Colleague and I drew the attention of his Excellency to the representations regarding the engagement of Foreign assistants

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 748, No. 752.]

which we had made to his predecessor on the 27th September last. (See my telegram No. 392.)⁽²⁾

Mohtashem es Saltaneh replied to me that after what had happened—he evidently referred to the unfavourable response encountered by the Persian Government's applications to the Italian and French Governments—I could feel assured that there was no likelihood of Persia applying again to any of the Great Powers.

My Russian Colleague tells me that Mohtashem es Saltaneh gave him too to understand that there need be no apprehension of further applications of the kind to any of the European Great Powers.

I have, &c.

G. BARCLAY.

MINUTE

It is satisfactory that there will be no further applications to European Great Powers for advisers but the danger is that, in view of the appointment of Americans, Germany may insist.

H. N.

Feb[ruary] 14, 1911

R. P. M.

L. M.

A. N.

E. G.

⁽²⁾ [Sir G. Barclay's telegram (No. 392) of September 30, 1910, D. 10 A.M., R. 1 P.M., stated that a joint verbal communication had been made on September 27 by Sir G. Barclay and M. Poklevski-Kozniell (F.O. 371/963. 35319/29750/10/34.) It was to the effect that "the two Powers had no objection to the engagement of American financial advisers but that if the Persian Government persisted further in disregarding our friendly advice to seek foreign assistants from the minor powers our Governments would insist on the engagement of some of their own subjects." *cp.* Sir G. Barclay's despatch (No. 199), D. November 2, R. November 21, 1910. (F.O. 371/963. 42256/29750/10/34.) *cp.* Siebert, p. 104.]

No. 759.

Count Benckendorff to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1185.

3823/1857/11/34.

London, D. January 29, 1911.

My dear Sir Edward,

R. February 1, 1911.

I don't like to trouble you on Sunday, that is why I write, asking you to consider this as a verbal communication. I just received a telegram from Mr. Sazonow.⁽²⁾ He raises serious objections to the appointment of American advisers to Persia, the United States being a great Power. He apprehends it might be used as a precedent by other great Powers. He says the French Ambassador at St. Petersburg expressed himself strongly in the same sense. I remember you having shown me on Friday Mr. Bryce's telegram informing you on this subject.⁽³⁾ Mr. Sazonow is very desirous of knowing your opinion, and hopes you will agree with him.

Yours sinc[ere]ly,

BENCKENDORFF.

MINUTES.

Of course we, equally with the Russians, should prefer to see the subjects of a minor European Power appointed but in face of the resolution of the Mejlis to appoint Americans we suggested to the Russian Gov[ernment] that we should not oppose this (32973/1910).⁽⁴⁾

⁽¹⁾ [This letter was sent to Berlin; to Washington.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp.* Siebert, p. 104.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 751, No. 757.]

⁽⁴⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 567) to Mr. O'Beirne of September 13, 1910, D. 3.25 A.M., is not reproduced. It indicated the lines of the joint communication to Persia made on September 27. *cp.* immediately preceding document, and *note* (2). (F.O. 371/963. 32973/29750/10/34.)]

M. Sazonow did not like the idea for the same reason as he now gives but he finally agreed (33473/1910)⁽⁵⁾ and the two Ministers were instructed to make the necessary communication to the Persian Gov[ernmen]t (33635/1910)⁽⁶⁾

I do not see how we could change this attitude now even if there were time to stop the appointments

The drawbacks were considered at the time and it was thought better, in spite of them, not to follow a policy which would run counter both to the Persian Gov[ernmen]t (who wanted Frenchmen) and to the Mejlis (who wanted Americans).

If the Germans demand equal treatment it can always be pointed out to them that the United States is not a European Great Power and has no political or other interests in Persia whatever

H. N.

Jan[uary] 30th, 1911.

R. P. M.

See 259.⁽⁷⁾ M. Sazonow agreed that we should not raise any objection to Americans and so instructed M. Poklewsky who together with Sir G. Barclay informed Hussein Kuli Khan in September last that the two Gov[ernmen]ts had no objection to American financial advisers.⁽⁸⁾

M. Sazonow has forgotten all this. At the same time, I do foresee difficulties if Americans are chosen—and it will not be easy to keep out others—which has hitherto been our policy. We asked the Italian G[overnmen]t not to allow the app[ointmen]t of Italians and they acquiesced. Could we reply that you are willing to approach the U[nited] S[tates] G[overnmen]t unofficially, if M. Sazonow will instruct the Russian Amb[assador] at Washington similarly.

L. M.

The matter has apparently gone too far between the U[nited] S[tates] Gov[ernmen]t and Persia for us now to intervene at Washington in the hope of inducing the U[nited] S[tates] Gov[ernmen]t to decline the Persian request. A reply to C[oun]t Benckendorff⁽⁹⁾ could be drawn up based on what occurred in Nov[ember] last in connexion with American advisers and recalling attitude then adopted by Russian and British Gov[ernmen]ts and saying that if any application were made by the Persians to a *European* Great Power we should insist on advisers being supplied by Russia and ourselves.

A tel[egram] might be also drafted to Sir G. Barclay giving substance of what we are saying to C[oun]t Benckendorff.⁽¹⁰⁾

When above drafts are ready they sh[oul]d be submitted to the Sec[retary] of State.

A. N.

Sir A. Nicolson.

We have not been approached by the U[nited] S[tates] G[overnmen]t yet and Mr. Bryce has only reported that he learns "on good authority" etc., etc. If American financiers are app[oin]ted, M. Bizot will presumably resign and the French Gov[ernmen]t will make a grievance out of this and may possibly make common cause with Germany. This *might* be used by us, in justification of a change of attitude.

But I feel the difficulty of altering our policy and only want to bring these considerations to your notice.

L. M.

⁽⁵⁾ [Mr. O'Beirne's telegram (No. 257) of September 14, 1910, D. 8.5 P.M., R. 9 P.M., is not reproduced as the contents are sufficiently indicated above. (F.O. 371/963. 33473/29750/10/34A.)]

⁽⁶⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 271) to Sir G. Barclay of September 17, 1910, D. 1 P.M., gave instructions for the communication to be made "at an opportune moment." (F.O. 371/963. 33635/29750/10/34A.)]

⁽⁷⁾ [Mr. O'Beirne's telegram (No. 259) of September 16, 1910, D. 8.10 P.M., R. 8.30 P.M., reported M. Sazonov's concurrence in the use of the term "will not object to" instead of "authorises" in defining the Russo-British attitude to the appointment of American advisers. (F.O. 371/963. 33635/29750/10/34A.)]

⁽⁸⁾ [For this communication, v. immediately preceding document, *note* (2).]

⁽⁹⁾ [v. *infra*, pp. 755-6, No. 763]

⁽¹⁰⁾ [v. *infra*, p. 754, No. 761, and *note* (1).]

No. 760.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1185.
 3621/1857/11/34A.
 Tel. (No. 20.)

St. Petersburg, January 30, 1911.

D. 8.32 P.M.

R. 9.30 P.M.

Washington telegram No. 13.⁽²⁾

Minister for Foreign Affairs considers that after what has passed in regard to French and German advisers the employment of Americans would almost certainly lead Germany to put forward a claim for the engagement of a German.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Washington (as No. 16); to Tehran (as No. 24); to Paris (as No. 48); to Berlin (as No. 29). A copy was sent to the India Office.]

⁽²⁾ [Mr. Bryce's telegram (No. 13), D January 27, R. January 28, 1911, 8 A.M. It stated that the United States Government would supply Persia with a list of financial experts, advising that two should be chosen, who would appoint their own assistants. (F.O. 371/1185 3236/1857/11/34A.)]

No. 761.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1185.
 3621/1857/11/34A.
 Tel. (No. 18.)

*Foreign Office, January 31, 1911.*Your telegram No. 20.⁽²⁾See Sir G. Barclay's desp[atch] No. 199⁽³⁾ of last year, penultimate par[agraph].

You should remind M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] of decision then come to and of communication made to Persian Gov[ernmen]t. I do not see why we should not adhere to the line then taken that U[nited] S[tates of] A[merica] not being European the employment of Americans provides no precedent for employment of subject of any great European Power. If M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] desires I will instruct British Ambassador at Washington to make unofficial enquiry whether the U[nited] S[tates] Gov[ernmen]t attaches importance to the matter and is entertaining it, but it seems difficult to abandon attitude so definitely taken by us last September and if M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] is firmly decided to insist with us that if Persian Gov[ernmen]t takes Advisers from any great European Power she must also employ British and Russian Advisers I do not see that there can be danger of matter going in practice beyond Americans as far as Great Powers are concerned.

E. G.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Washington (No. 17); to Tehran (No. 26).]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

⁽³⁾ [Sir G. Barclay's despatch (No. 199), D. November 2, R. November 21, 1910, stated in its penultimate paragraph that he had made the joint verbal communication to the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs (F.O. 371/963 42256/29750/10/34.) *cp. supra*, p. 752, No. 758, note ⁽²⁾; p. 753, No. 759, *min.*]

No. 762.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1185.
 3860/1857/11/34A.
Tel. (No. 25.)

St. Petersburg, February 1, 1911.
 D. 8.25 P.M.
 R. 10.12 P.M.

I communicated to Minister for Foreign Affairs this afternoon substance of your telegram No. 18.⁽²⁾

His Excellency said that he would be very grateful if you would make the unofficial enquiry which you suggest at Washington.⁽³⁾ He had not forgotten communication made to Persian Government last September,⁽⁴⁾ but he thought that now Germany had so clearly manifested her desire for the appointment of a German adviser she would be sure to insist on it were American advisers to be engaged, despite anything we might say as to the United States not being a European Power. Result would be the establishment of an international administration in Persia, and this he is most anxious to avoid on account of complications to which it would certainly lead.

He has already telegraphed to the Russian Minister at Tehran in the above sense.

(1) [This telegram was sent to Washington (as No. 20); to Tehran (as No. 32). A copy was sent to the India Office.]

(2) [*v.* immediately preceding document.]

(3) [Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 21) to Mr. Bryce of February 2, 1911, D. 10 P.M., gave instructions that enquiry should be made. (F.O. 371/1185. 3860/1857/10/34A.)]

(4) [*cp. supra*, p. 752, No. 758, note (2).]

No. 763.

Sir Edward Grey to Count Benckendorff.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1185.
 3823/1857/11/34.
Private.

My dear Ambassador,

Foreign Office, February 1, 1911.

With ref[erence] to your letter of Jan[uary] 29⁽²⁾ relative to the proposed engagement of American advisers in the Persian Ministry of Finance to which M. Sazonow has raised objections, you will remember that the question was thoroughly discussed in Sept[ember] of last year and that M. Sazonow then agreed that this step, which was desired by the Mejlis, was not likely to give rise to political difficulties, Americans not being subjects of a great European Power. The Persian Gov[ernmen]t were accordingly informed by Sir G. Barclay and M. Poklewski on Sept[ember] 29⁽³⁾ that the two Powers had no objection to the engagement of American financial advisers, but that, if the Persian Gov[ernmen]t persisted further in disregarding the friendly advice of the two Gov[ernmen]ts to seek foreign assistants from the minor Powers, the engagement of some British and Russian subjects would be insisted on.

I do not see why the two Gov[ernmen]ts should not adhere to the line then taken—that, the United States of America not being a great European Power, the

(1) [This letter was sent on February 3 to Berlin; to Washington.]

(2) [*v. supra*, p. 752, No. 759.]

(3) [*v. supra*, p. 752, No. 758, note (2).]

employment of American citizens provides no precedent for the employment of the subjects of any other great Power.

If however, M. Sazonow desires it, I will instruct the British Ambassador at Washington to make an unofficial enquiry whether the United States Gov[ernmen]t attach importance to the matter and are entertaining it, but it seems to me to be difficult to abandon the attitude so definitely taken up by us last Sep[tember].

If M. Sazonow is firmly decided to insist, in concert with Great Britain, that if the Persian Gov[ernmen]t takes advisers from any great European Power they must also employ British and Russian advisers, I do not see that there can be any danger of the matter going, in practice, beyond the employment of Americans as far as the great Powers are concerned.

I have addressed a telegram to Sir G. Buchanan instructing him to make a communication to M. Sazonow in this sense.⁽¹⁾

Yours sincerely,

E. GREY.

⁽⁴⁾ [v *supra*, p 754, No. 761]

No. 764.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1185.
4097/1857/11/34.
Tel. (No. 36.)

Tehran, February 3, 1911.

D. 9 P.M.

R. 7.20 P.M.

St. Petersburg telegram No. 25.⁽²⁾

Medjliss yesterday authorised Persian Government to conclude contracts with American financial advisers, and allotted a sum of 5,600*l.* for their salaries. Vote of thanks to the United States Minister was passed with enthusiastic acclamation.

(Confidential.)

My Russian colleague has not received any communication from his Government, and thinks that it is too late now to upset engagement of the Americans, and that, in face of our previous statements, to do so would produce a bad effect. I quite agree with him. Sir G. Buchanan informed.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to St. Petersburg; to Washington (as No. 23). A copy was sent to the India Office.]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, p 755, No. 762.]

No. 765.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1185.
4158/1857/11/34A.
Tel. (No. 32.)

Foreign Office, February 4, 1911, 3.15 P.M.

Sir G. Barclay's tel[egram] No. 36⁽²⁾ and Mr. Bryce's tel[egram] No. 16.⁽³⁾

Inform Russian Minister for F[oreign] A[ffairs] that H[is] M[ajesty's] Ambassador at Washington strongly deprecates enquiry and that, in view of

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Washington (No. 27); to Tehran (No. 37).]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

⁽³⁾ [Mr. Bryce's telegram (No. 16), D. February 3, R. February 4, 1911, reported that unofficial enquiries "may have unfortunate effect here." Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 26) of February 4, 1911, D. 3.15 P.M., cancelled the instructions for an enquiry. (F.O. 371/1185. 4158/1857/11/34A.)]

information given by H[is] M[ajesty's] Ambassador at Tehran it is now too late to open the question which, it is clear, would have very bad effect at Tehran after our joint communication of last year⁽¹⁾ assenting to employment of Americans.

(¹) [*v. supra*, p. 752, No. 758, note (²)]

No. 766.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1185.
4463/1857/11/34A.
Tel. (No. 27.)

St. Petersburg, February 6, 1911.

D. 7 P.M.

R. 9.30 P.M.

Your telegram No. 32.⁽²⁾

Minister for Foreign Affairs agrees that it is now too late to do anything more about American advisers, and says that if Germany puts forward German candidate we shall have to bring strong pressure to bear on Persian Government to prevent his being engaged.

(Sent to Tehran.)

MINUTES.

I should not have thought that one German adviser would do much harm

H N

Feb[ruary] 7, 1911

If German advisers are appointed we should at all events have to ask for British and Russian advisers

R. P. M.

L. M.

As in deference to our wishes France and Italy declined request of the Persian Gov[ernment], we could not do otherwise than act as M. Sazonow suggests in regard to a German adviser.

A. N.

M.

(¹) [This telegram was sent to Washington (as No. 30). A copy was sent to the India Office.]

(²) [*v. immediately preceding document.*]

No. 767.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1179.
4640/51/11/34.
Tel. (No. 39.)

Tehran, February 7, 1911.

D. 12.35 P.M.

R. 5.30 P.M.

Russian Government have now consulted Russian Minister as to immediate withdrawal of Kazvin force. Russian Minister is telegraphing his concurrence, but pointing out that the snow on the roads makes some delay inevitable. I have pointed out to him desirability of an early announcement, but I fear temptation to utilise delay due to snow for a final effort to settle motor-car question may be too strong for him.

Early announcement is very desirable.

(¹) [Copies of this telegram were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

An alarming boycott of a newly-opened branch of Russian Bank at Kum is in full swing, and there are signs of renewed anti-Russian agitation here owing to recent crimes by Caucasians.

(Repeated to St. Petersburg.)

MINUTE.

Even an announcement might do some good in calming agitation.

H. N.
Feb[ruary] 8, 1911
R. P. M.
L. M.
A. N.
M.

No. 768.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 871/1179.
5155/51/11/34A.
(No. 34.)

St. Petersburg, D. February 7, 1911.

R. February 13, 1911.

Sir,
In a conversation which I had with the Minister for Foreign Affairs on the 30th of last month His Excellency spoke to me in a much more hopeful strain with regard to Persian affairs and expressed satisfaction at the fact that many of the questions pending between the two Governments were now in a fair way of settlement. He hoped, he said, soon to be in a position to withdraw the Russian troops from Kasvin and was, indeed, only waiting for a reply to a telegram which he had sent to Monsieur Poklewsky to give the order for their withdrawal. It would, he thought, be well for Russia to give the Persian Government this proof of their disinterestedness at the present moment as he was much preoccupied by the activity being displayed by the Turks in the frontier districts. Five hundred men had recently been despatched to Sulduz, which was beyond the shadow of a doubt in Persian territory, and some step would soon have to be taken at Constantinople with a view to preventing further Turkish encroachments. As His Excellency expressed the hope that His Majesty's Government would co-operate with the Russian Government on this question I repeated to him the assurances which I had given him on the receipt of your telegram No. 6 of the 4th January⁽²⁾ to the effect that His Majesty's Government would gladly support Russian representations at Constantinople with regard to the Turco-Persian frontier question. Monsieur Sazonov also expressed to me some misgivings as to a report which had reached him that the Young Turks were endeavouring to effect a "*rapprochement*" with the Persians for the purpose of concerting common action against England and Russia.

In a further conversation which I had with His Excellency after receiving your telegram No. 17 of the 31st ultimo⁽³⁾ I endeavoured once more to impress on him

⁽¹⁾ [A copy of this despatch was sent to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 747, No. 748, *min.*, and *note* ⁽³⁾.]

⁽³⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 17) of January 31, 1911, D. 2.5 P.M., instructed Sir G. Buchanan to urge on M. Sazonov that the withdrawal of troops from Kazvin would greatly relieve the situation. (F.O. 371/1179. 3622/51/11/34A.)]

the expediency of at once withdrawing the Russian troops from Kasvin; but, as His Excellency had still received no reply from Monsieur Poklewsky he had nothing to add to what he had already told me on the subject. On my remarking that the withdrawal of these troops would greatly strengthen our position whenever we decided to make representations at Constantinople with regard to the Turco-Persian frontier question, Monsieur Sazonow contended that there was no analogy between the two cases as the Turks were actually administering the occupied districts as if they belonged to the Sultan and were transforming their Consular Officers into Kaimakams.

On calling on His Excellency yesterday I told him that Sir George Barclay had telegraphed that Monsieur Poklewsky did not appear to have received any explicit instructions to report his views with regard to the withdrawal of the Kasvin troops, independently of the Motor-car concession question.⁽¹⁾ Monsieur Sazonow replied that Monsieur Poklewsky must have misunderstood his instructions. He had telegraphed to him saying that now that the motor-car question was the only one about which there still existed any doubt he was anxious to withdraw the troops as soon as he could find a convenient pretext and that he would like to have his views on the subject. On my asking him whether he would mind sending Monsieur Poklewsky another telegram His Excellency at once promised to do so.

In the course of our conversation I told Monsieur Sazonow that the Turkish Ambassador, on meeting me at a party the other night, had complained of the severe terms in which His Excellency had recently spoken to him of Turkish encroachments on Persian territory and had appealed to me for my sympathy. I had, I added, informed Turkhan Pasha that, though I was not acquainted with what Monsieur Sazonow had actually said to him, I was entirely at one with His Excellency in condemning what appeared to me to be an unwarranted occupation of Persian frontier districts. Monsieur Sazonow replied that he was very glad that I had said this: that he had had a very serious conversation with Turkhan Pasha a few days ago and had told him that, if the Turkish troops continued to advance in the way they were doing at present they would one day find themselves confronted by Russian bayonets.

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

MINUTE.

Approve Sir G. Buchanan's language to M. Sazonow and Turkhan Pasha.⁽⁵⁾
We have not heard of the despatch of 500 Turkish soldiers to Solduz.

H. N.
L. M.
R. P. M.
A. N.
E. G.

⁽¹⁾ [Sir G. Barclay's telegram (No 35) of February 3, 1911, D. 7.10 p.m., R. 9 p.m., is not reproduced as its contents are sufficiently indicated above. (F.O. 371/1179. 4096/51/11/34.)]

⁽⁵⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's despatch (No. 53) of February 21, 1911, approved Sir G. Buchanan's language. (F.O. 371/1179. 5155/51/11/34A.)]

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1185.

5156/1857/11/34A.

(No. 35.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, D. February 7, 1911.

R. February 17, 1911.

In a conversation which I had with the Minister for Foreign Affairs on the 30th of last month His Excellency told me that he was very averse to the idea of the employment of American Advisers by the Persian Government. On my reminding him that he had last September waived the objections which he had previously made to their engagement and had accepted our view that, as the United States was not a European Great Power, they stood on quite a different footing to either France or Germany,⁽²⁾ His Excellency said that he was afraid that, after what had recently passed on the subject of Foreign Advisers, Germany would at once demand the employment of a German were any Americans to be engaged.

On my communicating to him two days later the substance of your telegram No. 18 of the 31st ultimo⁽³⁾ His Excellency said that he had not forgotten that we had informed the Persian Government last September that we would raise no objections to American Advisers on account of their not being the subjects of a European Great Power but that now that Germany had so clearly manifested her intention of putting forward a German for the post of Adviser to one of the Persian Ministries, she would pay no attention to anything we might say with regard to the disinterestedness of the United States in Persian Affairs. It would therefore be far safer to restrict the choice of the Persian Government to the Minor Powers as the appointment of a German Adviser would inevitably lead to the establishment of an International Administration in Persia and would consequently entail every sort of difficulty and complication. He had already telegraphed to Monsieur Poklewsky in the above sense and he would be very grateful if you would act as you had suggested and enquire unofficially at Washington whether the United States Government attached any importance to the appointment of American Advisers.

On the receipt of your telegram No. 32 of the 4th instant⁽⁴⁾ I informed Monsieur Sazonow that His Majesty's Ambassador at Washington strongly deprecated the idea of addressing any such enquiries to the United States Government and that, now that the engagement of American Advisers had been definitely decided on by the Persian Government it was, in your opinion, too late to reopen the question. Monsieur Sazonow said that he shared this view though he could not but regret the step which the Persian Government were taking. He was afraid that it would create a precedent of which Germany might avail herself to put forward a German candidate for the post of Adviser to one of the Persian Ministries; and in that case we should have to bring strong pressure to bear on the Persian Government to prevent such an appointment being made.

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

MINUTE.

The only remedy for the situation, if it arises, lies in stronger pressure on the Persian Gov[ernmen]t.

H. N.

Feb[ruary] 13, 1911

R. P. M.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been seen at Berlin. It was sent in print to Paris; to Berlin; to Washington.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 752, No. 758, note (2); pp. 753-4, No. 759, mins., and notes (4)-(7).]

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 754, No. 761.]

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 756-7, No. 765.]

No. 770.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1179.

Tehran, February 8, 1911.

4773/51/11/34.

D. 5.30 P.M.

Tcl. (No. 40.)

R. 10 P.M.

My telegram No. 39.⁽²⁾

Russian Minister tells me that he will recommend to his Government that he should announce withdrawal of Kazvin force at his first audience with the Regent.⁽³⁾
(Sent to St. Petersburg.)

⁽¹⁾ [Copies of this telegram were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 757-8, No. 767.]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 749, No. 753, note ⁽³⁾.]

No. 771.

Mr. Bryce to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1185.

6679/1857/11/34.

(No. 42.)

Washington, D. February 14, 1911.

Sir,

R. February 23, 1911.

With reference to my telegram No. 13 of the 27th ultimo,⁽²⁾ I have the honour to report that it is announced in the press that Mr. W. Morgan Shuster of Washington, has been appointed Treasurer General of the Persian Empire.

In addition to this Post there will, it is said, be an American Inspector and Expert Accountant to serve as Assistants to the Treasurer-General and Director of Taxation with one Assistant. These officials will be under the direction of the Persian Minister of Finance and their contracts will be for a minimum period of three years. It is expected that the names of these officials will be announced shortly.

Mr. Shuster has been in the United States Customs in Cuba and the Philippines and had charge of the reorganization of the Philippines Customs Service. In 1906 he was appointed Secretary of Public Instruction to the Philippine Islands and a Member of the Philippine Commission. He is further a member of the Bar of the Supreme Court of the United States and of the Federal Court of Customs Appeals.⁽³⁾

I have, &c.

JAMES BRYCE.

MINUTES.

The United States Gov[ernmen]t have appointed a man of some distinction though he does not appear, from the account here given of his services, to have special experience in finance.

H. N.

Feb[ruary] 23, 1911.

R. P. M.

L. M.

A. N.

If he is a good man this step may really improve the chance of Persia getting on her feet, but I do not envy him his job.

E. G.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch was sent to Paris.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 754, No. 760, note ⁽²⁾.]

⁽³⁾ [Mr. Shuster arrived in Tehran on May 12.]

No. 772.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.

F.O. 371/1179.
5144/51/11/34A.
(No. 42.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 15, 1911.

I have received Y[our] E[xcellency]'s telegram No 34 of Feb[ruary] 11th⁽¹⁾ relating to the withdrawal of the Russian troops from Kazvin. Y[our] E[xcellency] should take an early opportunity of expressing to M. Sazonow the great satisfaction of H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] at this decision of the Russian Gov[ernment].

[I am, &c.

E. GREY.]

(1) [Sir G. Buchanan's telegram (No. 34) of February 11, 1911, D. 8-12 p.m., R. 8-15 p.m., informed Sir Edward Grey that orders for the withdrawal of Russian troops from Kazvin had been issued and would be communicated to the Regent by M. Poklevski-Koziell. (F.O. 371/1179. 5144/51/11/34A.)]

III.—THE APPOINTMENT OF MAJOR STOKES.

No. 773.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1191.
25678/25669/11/34.
(No. 95.) Confidential.

Tehran, D. June 18, 1911.

Sir,

R. July 3, 1911.

With reference to my Despatch No. 84 of the 6th June,⁽²⁾ I have the honour to transmit herewith an English text of a further bill submitted to the Mejliss on the 8th instant,⁽³⁾ and passed practically with unanimity and without modification, at to-day's sitting.

The 12 articles contained in the bill were originally drafted by Mr. Morgan Shuster and translated into Persian for submission to the Mejliss. The preamble of which I enclose an English translation was drafted by the Finance Minister who introduced the measure.

A glance at this law will show that it defines Mr. Shuster's functions and endows him with very wide powers in the domain of finance.

The first impression which the bill conveys is that Mr. Shuster is about to undertake the complete remodelling of the Ministry of Finance, and to commence operations by making a clean sweep of the existing machinery. The Minister of Finance, however, when questioned on the subject yesterday by Mr. Churchill, replied that this point had in fact already been raised by the Finance Committee of the Mejliss, which was then examining the bill, and he had been able to explain to it that Mr. Shuster had no such intentions at any rate for the present. He

(1) [A copy of this despatch was sent to the Director of Military Operations.]

(2) [Sir G. Barclay's despatch (No. 84), D. June 6, R. July 3, 1911, reported that the American financial assistants were receiving the support of the Mejliss. A copy of a bill for the Control of the Loan Money, dated May 30, 1911, drawn up by Mr. Morgan Shuster, was enclosed. (F.O. 371/1191. 25669/25669/11/34.)]

(3) [Not reproduced.]

was going first to organise the Treasury Department, on the lines laid down in the bill, but he would not be able for some time to deal with the departments which carried on the intricate business of the Finance Ministry with the provinces &c.

I am unfortunately unable to say with any certainty what Mr. Shuster's views or intentions are, as all my information on the subject has so far been obtained indirectly, Mr. Shuster not having yet called on me or on any of my colleagues. I have no doubt that he finds the work before him so absorbing and the task of such magnitude that he can spare no time for social amenities. Mr. Mornard the Belgian Director of Customs is inclined to look upon Mr. Shuster's aloofness—I believe they have not yet met—as an indication of hostility on the latter's part.

Mr. Wood, the Chief Manager of the Imperial Bank, is already in constant touch with the Treasurer-General and has, I believe, formed a high opinion of his capability, earnestness, and determination.

On the Persians Mr. Shuster has apparently created a great impression, and the unanimity with which all parties have given him the full powers for which he has asked proves that they repose the utmost confidence in him. I understand that he does not expect to stop speculation and leakage at once and that he will be quite content if he succeeds within the next 6 months or a year to stop the larger leakages, or, in other words, to prevent the wholesale robbery of the State Treasury by corrupt officials, and to reduce wanton or foolish extravagance. He has let it be widely known that if he finds obstacles placed in his way by any person or persons, he will denounce them to the Mejliss and if he cannot remove their obstruction he will return to America.

I have, &c.

G. BARCLAY.

No. 774.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir A. Nicolson.⁽¹⁾

Private.⁽²⁾

My dear Nicolson,

Tehran, June 15, 1911.

. . . .⁽³⁾ Schuster [*sic*: Shuster] has not called upon any of the legations, wishing evidently not to incur the reproach which Bizot earned by his close relations with us and the Russians. I have only just made Schuster's acquaintance but I hope to see more of him when he feels sure enough of his ground to mix with official foreigners. At present he does not even know Mornard, the Administrator-General of the Customs, who is naturally rather "huffed" at being ignored. Schuster strikes one as being a strong man, and he has already managed to get from the Medjliss the fullest powers. He saw Churchill yesterday, and told him he had found absolute confusion in the finances. He said had he not been an optimist he would have told the Persians "Gentlemen I am not going to attempt this business; to Hell with your finances! I am going back to America." However the Medjliss had given him wide powers and he would try to establish a certain measure of order. Possibly he might be able to bring about such a state of things that whereas the Government people had formerly robbed in hundreds of tomans they would now only be able to rob in tens. He said he would at first devote his

⁽¹⁾ [This letter is initialled by Sir Edward Grey.]

⁽²⁾ [Carnock MSS., Vol. II of 1911.]

⁽³⁾ [The opening paragraphs of this letter deal with the state of British trade in Persia and other matters not relevant to the present chapter.]

attention to the Central Administration, and it would be a long time before he could touch the Provinces. This last is very consoling as I dread the moment when he has to deal with Mohammerah. We shall then have a lot of trouble I expect. . . .⁽¹⁾

Yours very sincerely,

G. BARCLAY.

⁽¹⁾ [The last sentences of this letter are omitted as they are unofficial in character.]

No. 775.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1192.

Tehran, July 5, 1911.

26241/26241/11/34.

D. 4 p.m.

Tel. (No. 232.)

R. 5 p.m.

Conflict has arisen between American Treasurer-General and Belgian Administrator-General of Customs. Former contends that, in virtue of law of 13th June (see my despatch No. 95),⁽²⁾ latter should be subordinate to him, and he has demanded of the latter that all customs receipts should be placed to his account at the two banks. Mornard has so far failed to signify his acquiescence, and cheques drawn by him on the customs account at the Imperial Bank of Persia have been refused payment in pursuance of Treasurer-General's orders to recognise only latter's signature. A resolution of Cabinet approving Treasurer-General's demands was last night communicated to Administrator-General, who was ordered to obey law of 13th June.

Russian Minister is inclined to support Mornard, basing his attitude on the phrase in paragraph (b) of article 4 of Russian Consolidation Agreement (see my despatch No. 3)⁽³⁾ "à l'intervention de l'Administration de la Douane."

He thinks that Russian interests are jeopardised by such control of northern customs as is pledged under his agreement being given a newcomer who may not stay and who may be succeeded by a Persian.

I cannot myself see that the legitimate interests of either Russia or Great Britain are jeopardised by control of the customs revenues and expenditure claimed by Treasurer-General (please ask Imperial Bank of Persia to show you manager's letter of 29th June of last year).⁽⁴⁾ Manager is entirely in favour of subordination of customs to Treasurer-General, who has given most ample assurances to both banks that fixed charges will be met. He declares, in writing, that the gross receipts of the northern and southern customs will be deposited with Russian Bank and Imperial Bank of Persia respectively, and will be "carried in his books intact, and until all liens now constituting a charge on the receipts shall have been fully paid no cheques will be drawn against these revenues except for the actual and necessary expenses of customs administration as provided for in the recent agreements." This assurance, if given officially by Minister for Foreign Affairs, should, I think, satisfy us for Shuster's term of office, and it would be easy to make reserves for latter [*sic*] in case a Persian or other undesirable succeeded him.

I conceive that it would make deplorable impression in England and justly give umbrage to Americans if I opposed any action of Shuster which is in accordance

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to St. Petersburg (as No. 318). A copy was sent to the India Office.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 762-3, No. 773.]

⁽³⁾ [Sir G. Barclay's despatch (No. 3), D. January 23, R. February 13, 1911, enclosed a copy of the arrangement concluded between the Russian Bank and the Persian Government. (F.O. 371/1187. 5178/5178/11/34.) The arrangement was actually concluded on January 1/14, 1911, but was dated December 31, 1910/January 13, 1911.]

⁽⁴⁾ [*cp. infra*, p. 767, No. 779, and note ⁽⁵⁾.]

with a law passed by Medjliss, and which does not, in my opinion, prejudice British or Russian interests; and, reluctant as I should be to withhold my support from my Russian colleague if he asks for it, I shall nevertheless hold aloof from the controversy unless instructed to the contrary.

MINUTES

The first step to take is to ask the Imperial Bank of Persia to let us see the Manager's letter of June 29, 1910⁽¹⁾

At first sight Sir G. Barclay appears to be perfectly right and if he proves to be we should instruct Sir G. Buchanan to explain the situation to the Russian Gov[ernment] in the light of this telegram and induce them to tell M. Poklewski not to make trouble⁽²⁾

H. N

July 6, 1911.

I think Sir G. Barclay's view is right.

R. P. M.

A. N.

L. M.

⁽¹⁾ [*cp. infra*, p. 767, No. 779, and *note* (5)]

⁽²⁾ [*v. infra*, p. 766, No. 777]

No. 776.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1192.

26368/26241/11/34.

Tel. (No. 233.)

Tehran, July 6, 1911.

D. 3.45 P.M.

R. 3.15 P.M.

My immediately preceding telegram of July 4th.⁽²⁾

Cheque of Mornard on one of the Customs accounts at Imperial Bank of Persia was presented to the Imperial Bank of Persia who refused to meet it as not emanating from Treasurer-General. Russian Minister tells me that cheque was drawn for the transfer to Russian Bank of certain funds from Northern Customs which had been kept by Mornard for convenience at the Imperial Bank of Persia.

Russian Minister is very indignant and announces his determination to support Mornard strongly in his conflict with Treasurer-General.

Mornard's contention is that he cannot serve under anyone but the Grand Vizier and the Minister of Finance. Feeling assured of Russian Minister's support there is not much chance of his yielding. On the other hand Treasurer-General has the full support of Mejliss and I think it possible that if Mornard remains obstinate Mejliss will cancel his contract.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to St Petersburg (as No. 330). A copy was sent to the India Office.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. immediately preceding document*. The telegram was dated July 5.]

No. 777.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1192.

26241/26241/13/34.

Tel. (No. 319.)

*Foreign Office, July 6, 1911.*My immediately preceding telegram.⁽²⁾

I think Sir G. Barclay's view is quite right on the merits apart from any question of the nationality of Shuster. To oppose Shuster's proposal would defeat a chance of introducing some order into Persian finances which is to advantage of us both.

(1) [This telegram was repeated to Tehran (No. 190).]

(2) [*v supra*, pp. 764-5, No. 775, and note (1).]

No. 778.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1192.

26457/26457/11/34.

Tel. (No. 234.)

Tehran, July 7, 1911.

D. 10.30 A.M.

R. 9.30 A.M.

Treasurer-General was yesterday authorised almost unanimously by the Medjliss to engage a "financial assistant to organise a Treasury gendarmerie." Medjliss when considering this proposal was informed confidentially by the Treasurer-General that he intended to offer post to Major Stokes. This he has done now. In his letter to Stokes he says that Stokes' thorough knowledge of Persia and her general conditions coupled with his military training and acquaintance with the Persian language would render him exceedingly useful to Persian Gov[ernmen]t in the capacity indicated. Treasurer-General describes the duty of Treasury gendarmerie as being to give the necessary aid and support "especially in the provinces of the South" to the financial agents engaged in the collection of maliat and other direct taxes. Stokes would be under the orders of the Treasurer-General. Letter calls for early answer so that if it is favourable Treasurer-General may at once take steps to have formal application made to H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment].

I have not yet spoken to Russian Minister⁽²⁾ although he is sure to hear about the matter soon as it is already known by several of the foreign journalists. Pray inform me if you decide to move at St. Petersburg so that I may not have appearance to my Russian colleague of having held any thing back from him unduly.

It would I have little doubt be impossible irrespective of Persian Gov[ernmen]t expressly to restrict proposed appointment to the south as our efforts to this end would convince Medjliss that our real object was to give appointment a political significance and I am inclined to think that the proposal now made is the nearest approach that we shall get to an opening for our scheme of road guards.

I should mention that the Treasurer-General's letter to Stokes is the first I have heard of this move. Shuster has so far held aloof from foreign legations wishing apparently to preserve complete independence of foreign influence.

(1) [This telegram was sent to St. Petersburg (as No. 326) on July 10.]

(2) [In a private telegram to Mr. Tyrrell of July 7, Sir G. Barclay said that he had mentioned to M. Poklevski-Koziell that afternoon Mr. Shuster's offer to Major Stokes. He "found him quite unexpectedly complacent." He added that "it might really be worth while to move at St. Petersburg, if we do not mind the reserves that Russia would probably make as regards the compensating engagement of Russian officers." (F.O. 371/1192. 26457/26457/11/34.)]

MINUTES.

Coming on the top of the Mornard incident, the Russian G[overnmen]t will suspect Mr. Shuster of anti-Russian designs. It will be very unfortunate if Mr. Shuster excites the hostility of the Russian Gov[ernmen]t who can thwart him and make his task impossible if they wish to do so. It may become necessary to instruct Sir G. Barclay to give him a hint.

L. M.

If Major Stokes is appointed he must be cautioned to suppress all anti-Russian feelings and Sir G. Barclay might tell Mr. Shuster exactly what the situation is and point out how essential it is that no employé in Mr. Shuster's administration should show anything but complete impartiality between nations.

E. G.

No. 779.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1192.

26380/26380/11/34.

Tel. (No. 328.)

Foreign Office, July 10, 1911, 4.10 P.M.

Sir G. Barclay's tel[egrams] Nos. 232⁽²⁾ and 233⁽³⁾ and my tel[egram] No. 319.⁽⁴⁾

Explain to Russian Gov[ernmen]t situation as shown by these telegrams and express my earnest hope that, as Russian interests will not be jeopardised if the law is observed whereby Treasurer Gen[era]l has control instructions may be sent to Russian Minister at Tehran to maintain a neutral attitude in this dispute between M. Mornard and the Persian Gov[ernmen]t. The Imperial Bank are merely obeying the law.

Letter of Tehran manager of June 29, 1910⁽⁵⁾ referred to in former telegram deals with Administrator's habit of making up deficits in northern customs receipts from southern customs and *vice versa*, which is reprehensible, as it is impossible to estimate the value of either security. Copy follows by post.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Tehran (No. 195).]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 764-5, No. 775.]

⁽³⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 765, No. 776.]

⁽⁴⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 766, No. 777.]

⁽⁵⁾ [Not reproduced. A copy was sent to the Foreign Office by the Imperial Bank of Persia on July 6, 1911. An extract was sent to Sir G. Buchanan in Sir Edward Grey's despatch (No. 184) of July 12, 1911. (F.O. 371/1192. 26380/26380/11/34.)]

No. 780.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1192.

27347/26241/11/34A.

Tel. (No. 149.)

St. Petersburg, D. July 11, 1911, 8.22 P.M.

R. July 12, 1911, 11 A.M.

Your telegram No. 328.⁽²⁾

I explained circumstances fully to Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] but he regrets that he cannot send desired instructions to Russian Minister at Tehran.

⁽¹⁾ [A copy of this telegram was sent to the India Office.]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

He said that the agreement signed last December between the Russian bank and the Persian Government⁽³⁾ as well as the letter which was at the same time addressed to the bank by the administrator of customs,⁽⁴⁾ gave Russia the right to be consulted before any change was effected which might be contrary to her interests.

Though there had been no written agreement when the Americans were engaged, with the consent of Russia and England, there had been verbal understanding that they should act as Financial Advisers. Shuster was now claiming to act as Treasurer-General or Controller and to this neither Russia nor England had agreed. He was exceeding his powers without consulting us on a matter which closely concerned Russian interests.

Persian customs was the only sound and satisfactory administration in the country and would now be thrown into confusion as Mornard and many of his staff would probably go. The Americans had wide enough field for effecting financial reforms without touching the customs.

Shuster probably through ignorance was showing an utter disregard of the privileged position of Russia and England in Persia and it was most undesirable from a political point of view to admit intervention of third parties as this might constitute precedent for other great Powers. If the Belgian customs officials were to leave Americans would probably fill their places and an American Financial Control would be established.

I failed entirely to induce H[is] E[xc]ellency to take a more favourable view of the matter. He said that he had instructed Russian Ambassador to make a communication to you and suggested that two Ministers at Tehran might consult together and take what measures they thought best to bring about an understanding between Treasurer-General and Administrator of Customs.

Since returning from Ministry for Foreign Affairs I have received Sir G. Barclay's tel[egram] No. 243⁽⁵⁾ to you. I did mention the irregularity but the Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] made no remarks.

Sent to Tehran.

MINUTES.

We have never, so far as can be discovered, seen the letter referred to in paragraph 2 of this telegram⁽⁴⁾

As for paragraph 3, I cannot find that any agreement was come to with Russia and England or any stipulations made by them as to whether Mr. Shuster was to have executive powers or not. It seems on the face of it absurd to protest against his having them and yet expect him to reform the finances of Persia without them. In any case Mr. Shuster is not exceeding his powers but exercising those conferred on him by a law passed by the Mejlis, against which the Russians ought to have protested at the time if they had any objections to it.

I still fail entirely to see that either British or Russian interests are affected by Mr. Shuster's proceedings.

However, it is clear from this telegram that the Russian Gov[ernment] will not change their view and in the circumstances, much as one would desire to keep H[is] M[ajesty's] Legation out of the dispute, I suppose there is nothing for it but to instruct Sir G. Barclay as suggested by M. Neratow: but before taking this, or any, action it would be better to await Count Benckendorff's communication.⁽⁶⁾

H. N.

July 12, 1911.

R. P. M.

Mr. Shuster ought to have come to an understanding with M. Mornard and should not have ignored us and the Russians and the consequences may be serious if all the Belgian officials resign and if Russia is antagonized. I suggested a telegram to Sir G. Barclay⁽⁷⁾ this morning to make enquiry as to Persian engagements with the Belgian Custom officials. Add that Sir G.

⁽³⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 764, No. 775, and note ⁽³⁾.]

⁽⁴⁾ [Not reproduced.]

⁽⁵⁾ [Sir G. Barclay's telegram (No. 243) of July 11, D. 2-30 P.M., R. 1 P.M., suggested that the letter from the Tehran manager of June 29 should not be used at St. Petersburg. (F.O. 371/1192. 27193/26241/11/34.)]

⁽⁶⁾ [*v. infra*, pp. 770-1, No. 783.]

⁽⁷⁾ [*v. infra*, p. 770, No. 782.]

Barclay should consult M Poklewsky and act in the sense of the penultimate paragraph of this telegram

We might point out for Sir G. Barclay's own information that, 1) in our view, Mr. Shuster must have executive powers if any benefit is to accrue from his presence in Tehran but that this question need not be raised 2) but that if Russia is not consulted, she can make Mr. Shuster's position impossible.

L. M.

I agree with Mr. Mallet I daresay O[un]t Benckendorff will make a commun[icatio]n today.

A. N.
E. G.

I think we ought to ascertain from Sir G. Barclay what is the view of the Belgian Legation and whether the Persian Gov[er]nment are disregarding the conditions of M. Mornard's appointment and if so, whether they are justified in so doing without coming to an arrangement with them and the Belgian Gov[er]nment. Sir G. Barclay has not referred to this point. We had better telegraph in this sense at once and repeat to St. Petersburg.(7)

L. M.
A. N.
E. G.

(7) [v. *infra*, p. 770, No. 782]

No. 781.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.(1)

F.O. 371/1185.
29940/1857/11/34.
(No. 115.)

Gulahek, D. July 11, 1911.
R. July 31, 1911.

Sir,

Mr. Morgan Shuster has now been two months in Tehran and his influence is already a leading factor in the situation. The Mejliss, for the moment at least, is entirely at his command and proposals from him have only to be made to be accepted with practical unanimity.

One must admire the pluck and energy with which he has at once thrown himself into the struggle for reform but at the same time one cannot have but some misgivings as to the results of his headlong progress.

On the only occasion on which I have met Mr. Schuster he emphasised the purely financial character of the work before him and said that he was no politician. If he means by this merely that he will refrain from meddling in politics, one can only applaud his resolve, but the apparently light-hearted way in which he embarked on a conflict with the Belgian Customs Administration and followed this up with the offer of the Treasury Gendarmerie appointment to Major Stokes, in both of which steps he was exposing himself to opposition from Russia, would seem to give his disclaimer of the politician's rôle a more ominous significance and point to its denoting a disregard of political considerations which it would be wiser to take into account.

His Majesty's Ambassador at Washington foresaw the difficulties which might arise from Mr. Shuster's appointment when he wrote in his Despatch No. 45,(2) "if these accounts are true, Mr. Shuster is one of those persons with whom it will be necessary to deal tactfully from the outset so as to guide any laudable wish he may evince to protect the interests of the native Persians into channels consistent with the desire of His Majesty's Government to attain the same object by well-chosen methods suitable to oriental conditions." Unfortunately owing to Mr. Shuster's desire to promote amongst the Persians confidence in his independence of foreign influence, he has, as you are aware, so far held aloof from the Foreign

(1) [This despatch was sent to Washington.]

(2) [Mr. Bryce's despatch (No 45), D. February 16, R. February 28, 1911, is not reproduced, as its tenour is sufficiently indicated above. (F.O. 371/1185. 7421/1857/11/34.)]

Legations so that little opportunity has been afforded to my Russian Colleague or me for the tactful handling recommended by Mr. Bryce. Mr. Shuster by his conflict with M. Mornard has already provoked the bitter hostility of my Russian Colleague. As reported in my Despatch No. 114⁽³⁾ of yesterday this conflict seems to be in a fair way of adjustment but this instance is I fear by no means destined to be the last in which Mr. Shuster will come into conflict with the representatives of one or other of the two Great Neighbouring Powers.

I have, &c.

G. BARCLAY.

⁽³⁾ [Sir G. Barclay's despatch (No. 114), D. July 10, R. July 31, 1911, is not reproduced as its tenour is sufficiently indicated above. (F.O. 371/1192. 29939/26241/11/34.)]

No. 782.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1192.

27347/26241/11/34A.

Tel. (No. 203.)

Foreign Office, July 13, 1911, 6 p.m.

Sir G. Buchanan's telegram No. 149.⁽²⁾

We have not seen the letter referred to in paragraph 2.

According to telegram from your Russian colleague to Russian Amb[assado]r here, communic[ate]d most confidentially to us,⁽³⁾ Belgian Legation are much annoyed by Treasurer-General's action, which infringes conditions of Administrator's appointment. Is this so and are Persian Gov[ernmen]t in fact disregarding these conditions? If so, are they in your opinion justified in so doing without coming to arrangement with Belgian officials and Gov[ernmen]t?

You should consult your Russian colleague as suggested by Russian Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] (see penultimate paragraph of telegram).

For your own information. In our view Treasurer-General must have executive powers if any benefit is to accrue from his presence at Tehran, (though this question need not be raised) but if Russia is not consulted she can make his position impossible; an arrangement that Russia can accept is therefore very desirable in the interest of the Treasurer-General's work, the success of which it is important to promote.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to St Petersburg (No. 341).]

⁽²⁾ [*v supra*, pp. 767-8, No 780]

⁽³⁾ [*v immediately succeeding document*]

No. 783.

Communication from Count Benckendorff of July 14, 1911.⁽¹⁾

Telegramme de M. Poklewsky au C[om]t[e] de Benckendorff en date de Teheran Juillet 1911.

F.O. 371/1192.

27604/26241/11/34.

Très confidentiel.

Un conflit très regrettable vient d'éclater entre M.M. Mornard et Shuster pour la délimitation de leurs attributions respectives.

⁽¹⁾ [A private note from Count Benckendorff to Sir A. Nicolson accompanied this communication. He described it as being made "very confidentially, let us call it privately." He added "I do wish our representatives could take the same view of this question, which seems to me rather important."]

M. Shuster après que le Parlement eut voté ses pouvoirs a écrit aux différentes Banques pour les prier de refuser les chèques signés pour compte de la douane par M. Mornard; il a écrit en même temps à ce dernier avec l'exigence que toutes les recettes douanières lui soient remises, et qu'à l'avenir toutes les dépenses, y compris les traitements des employés de la douane, soient effectuées par des chèques contre-signés par lui-même. M. Mornard considère de pareilles mesures comme incompatibles avec la dignité des fonctionnaires Belges et comme de nature à porter atteinte à leur autorité aux yeux de leurs subordonnés indigènes; le Gouvernement Belge de son côté avait dans le temps déclaré ne pouvoir admettre la subordination de ces fonctionnaires à d'autres étrangers.

En plus notre accord au sujet de la conversion prévoit le droit de M. Mornard de prélever sur les recettes douanières une somme de 350,000 toumanes par an pour l'administration douanière et stipule que notre Banque effectuera les dépenses obligatoires d'après les ordres du Ministre des Finances par l'entremise de l'Administration des Douanes.

Tout en sauvegardant ses droits et sa dignité, M. Mornard n'entend bien entendu nullement s'opposer à ce qu'après les paiements des différentes dépenses obligatoires, l'excédent des recettes soit mis à la disposition du Trésorier Général.

La Banque Impériale de Perse a cru devoir se conformer aux instructions de M. Shuster et a refusé en deux occasions de faire honneur aux chèques de M. Mornard, sans même en prévenir ce dernier.

La Légation de Belgique a vivement ressenti ce procédé. Elle a saisi de l'affaire la Légation de Sa Majesté Britannique et prévenu le Directeur de la Banque qu'un procès lui serait intenté si satisfaction n'était pas obtenue.

Notre Banque se conformera aux instructions seulement en ce qui concerne l'excédent et pour le reste réglera entièrement sa conduite sur les dispositions de l'accord relatif à la conversion.

Quoique M. Shuster donne des assurances quant à l'exactitude des paiements qui nous intéressent, il y a, pourtant, nécessité pour nous à maintenir les stipulations de l'accord, car il faut envisager le cas où les fonctionnaires Américains viendraient à se retirer et où un Persan serait nommé au poste de Trésorier Général.

C'est en me basant sur ce qui précède, sur l'accord ci-dessus, sur la note de MM. Hartwig et Marling du 22 Février 1908 No. 78⁽²⁾ et aussi sur nos rapports constants avec les fonctionnaires Belges, que j'ai exprimé à mon collègue Britannique combien je trouvais inadmissible le procédé de la Banque Impériale. En même temps je suis énergiquement intervenu en faveur de M. Mornard auprès du Gouvernement Persan avec insistance et force, et j'ai prévenu ce dernier qu'au cas où les fonctionnaires Belges se retireraient je proposerai au Gouvernement Impérial de les remplacer par des Russes.

A mon grand regret ni mon collègue Britannique ni moi n'avons pu contribuer au règlement de l'incident, car M. Shuster n'avait pas cru devoir faire des visites aux Représentants étrangers.

(2) [The *Annual Report on Persia for the Year 1908* contains the statement that "on the 6th March an identic note was addressed to the Minister for Foreign Affairs by the two Representatives, that rumours were current of a contemplated alteration in the customs administration, and asking his Excellency to deny the report, if it was incorrect, and to confirm previous assurances given that there would be no change in the present customs system." The rumour to which reference was made was to the effect that an attempt was being made to secure the dismissal of the Belgian officials under the control of M. Mornard, the Belgian Administrator of Customs, and to replace them by "Germans." Enclosure in Sir G. Barclay's despatch (No. 18A), D. February 10, R. March 4, 1910. (F.O. 371/956. 8668/8668/10/34.)]

No. 784.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1192.
 27788/26241/11/34.
 Tel. (No. 253.)

Tehran, July 15, 1911.
 D. 8 P.M.
 R. 3.45 P.M.

Your telegram No. 203.⁽²⁾

Letter contains merely schedule of obligatory charges referred to in paragraph (b) of article 4 of Russian Bank's consolidation agreement.⁽³⁾

Belgian chargé d'affaires has repeatedly told me that he was not taking matter "au tragique"; he has reported to his Government only by post. He has informed Persian Government that his Government could not allow Belgian officials to be placed under the orders of another foreigner, and they have assured him that there was no intention of placing Mornard under Shuster's orders. Shuster, however, is a man who likes to take matters into his own hands, and in this matter he has express warrant of the law of 13th June.⁽⁴⁾ How far in practice he will be able to reconcile exercise of his authority with Belgian pretensions must largely depend on forms he observes. So far as I can judge, Belgian chargé d'affaires is not inclined to press Mornard's case unduly. He tells me that outcome of a second long interview between Shuster and Mornard on 13th July was decidedly hopeful. Mornard has already acquiesced in transfer of the customs accounts standing in his name to the Treasurer-General.

I have told Russian Minister I am ready to join with him with a view to forwarding an understanding, but we shall have to act with great caution in view of Shuster's determined attitude of independence of foreign influence. Russian Minister wishes to postpone action for the moment and watch developments.

I have not been able yet to obtain copy of Belgian terms of appointment, but the Belgian chargé d'affaires tells me that it is expressly stated that the men are to serve under the orders of the Grand Vizier and the Minister of Finance. Law of 13th June conflicts with this stipulation. It would seem, therefore, that it would have been more correct to come to an arrangement with the Belgian officials and Government before the law was passed.

MINUTES.

This is much more hopeful. If Messrs. Shuster and Mornard can settle the question between them it will be by far the best solution as we shall be able to stand aside and avoid giving Mr. Shuster an excuse for complaining of foreign interference.

I agree with M. Poklewski that it is better to take no action for the moment.⁽⁵⁾

H. N.
 July 17, 1911.
 R. P. M.
 A. N.
 E. G.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to St. Petersburg (as No. 348). A copy was sent to the India Office.]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 770, No. 782.]

⁽³⁾ [Not reproduced. *cp. supra*, p. 764, No. 775, and *note* ⁽³⁾.]

⁽⁴⁾ [Not reproduced. *cp. supra*, pp. 762-3, No. 773.]

⁽⁵⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 349) of July 18, 1911, D. 2.30 P.M., informed Sir G. Buchanan to this effect. It was repeated to Tehran (No. 209). (F.O. 371/1192. 27788/26241/11/34.)]

No. 785.

Sir F. Cartwright to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1193.
 28525/27357/11/34A.
 T'el. (No. 80.)

Vienna, July 20, 1911.
 D. 7.10 P.M.
 R. 9 P.M.

Your telegram No. 73.⁽²⁾

Russian Ambassador and myself have taken steps to try to ascertain whether ex-Shah of Persia is still in Austria or not, but evidence to hand tends to show that he is not here. The newspapers announce that he is in Persia.

(Secret.)

Russian Ambassador some days ago succeeded in (?) delaying action without giving any reasons for doing so, and showed much indifference as to the urgency of our carrying out instructions from our Governments. From the Ambassador's attitude and from the language held by Russian Secretary to Mr. Russell, I am inclined to suspect that Russian Embassy were not unaware of the departure of the ex-Shah from the neighbourhood of Vienna, where he appears to have been.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to St. Petersburg (as No. 363); to Tehran (as No. 212). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 73) of July 15, 1911, D. 5 P.M., instructed Sir F. Cartwright to concert with his Russian colleague to warn the ex-Shah, Mahommed Ali Mirza, not to support intrigues directed against the existing régime in Persia. (F.O. 371/1193. 27634/27357/11/34A.)]

No. 786.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1193.
 28687/27357/11/34.
 T'el. (No. 272.)

Tehran, July 21, 1911.
 D. 11.20 A.M.
 R. 3.30 P.M.

Minister for Foreign Affairs visited me this morning to urge me privately to press you to use your influence with Russia to support present régime. I told him that H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] were in communication with the Russian Government and until I had instructions I must observe neutral attitude.

Russian circles do not conceal their elation at the prospect of possible return to power of the Ex-Shah. They feel that parliamentary régime is hostile to Russian influence, and point to the unparalleled disorders in provinces as proving its failure. No doubt Shuster's determined disregard of Russian susceptibilities which my Russian colleague feels bitterly is the determining factor if Russian Government prove resolved not to oppose Ex-Shah's restoration. Prevailing idea seems to be that the restoration of Mahomet Ali would develop into a régime under the control of the two powers.

Not repeated.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to St. Petersburg (as No. 373). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

No. 787.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1193.

28521/27357/11/34A.

Tel. (No. 371.)

Foreign Office, July 22, 1911, 12.10 P.M.

I agree as to the non-intervention by force but Russia and we through our cooperation with Russia have in some degree taken responsibility for preventing the ex-Shah from giving trouble: movement in his favour must have been engineered on Russian territory⁽²⁾ and it ought to be made very clear that his movement is not regarded by us with favour.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was in reply to one from Sir G. Buchanan (No 160) of July 20, 1911, D 8.24 P.M., R 10.15 P.M., giving M. Neratov's views on the return of the ex-Shah, and his determination to preserve a perfectly neutral attitude. (F.O 371/1193. 28521/27357/11/34A.)]

⁽²⁾ [A further telegram was sent to Sir G. Buchanan, by Sir A. Nicolson at 12.15 P.M. on July 22, as follows:—

Private.

Sir E[dward] Grey's Tel[egram] No 371.

Of course you will not mention to Act[ing] M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] that we consider movement in favour of Ex-Shah was engineered in Russia. Nicolson. (F.O. 371/1193 28521/27357/11/34A.)]

No. 788.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1193.

28864/27357/11/34.

Tel. (No. 163.)

St. Petersburg, July 23, 1911.

Return of ex-Shah to Persia.

Insinuations made in the Austrian and German papers, and repeated in certain sections of the British press, that the Russian Government have connived at the return of the ex-Shah are strongly resented here. The semi-official "Rossia" records His Majesty's movements since October last, and states that he left Odessa early in June, with the intention of proceeding to Carlsbad. It adds that he evidently travelled through Russia with a false passport, and that his sudden appearance in Persia came as a complete surprise to the Russian Government.

In my opinion no responsibility attaches to the Central Government, though the local authorities may be blamed for not having prevented him passing through the port of Baku. The Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs considers that eventually we will have to intervene actively if we give any assurances of support to the present Persian Government, but I am convinced that his Excellency has acted perfectly straightforwardly throughout.

⁽¹⁾ [The text given above is taken from the *Confidential Print*, as the original decypher cannot be traced. It was sent to Tehran (as No. 215). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1193.

29929/27357/11/34A.

(No. 212.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, D. July 24, 1911.

R. July 31, 1911.

On the receipt of your telegram No. 355 of the 18th instant,⁽²⁾ I called on the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs and enquired whether in view of the increasing gravity of the situation in Persia and of the appeal made by the Regent to the British and Russian Representatives, the Imperial Government would join His Majesty's Government in notifying the ex-Shah that under no circumstances could his return to Persia be allowed.

Monsieur Nératow interrupted me by saying that he had that morning received a telegram from the Russian Consul at Astrabad stating that the ex-Shah was reported to have landed at Gumish Tepe with a few followers and that His Majesty was preparing to march on Astrabad at the head of the tribes who had joined his standard.

In reply to my enquiry as to how His Majesty had contrived to get to Gumish Tepe and whether he had passed through Baku with the persons supposed to be his Emissaries, who had been temporarily detained by the Russian authorities, His Excellency said that he was entirely without information on the subject. He had caused enquiries to be made respecting the individuals, to whom I had alluded, but had been informed that no one had recently arrived at Baku whose appearance had given the authorities any grounds for suspicion.

I then proceeded to say that as the ex-Shah had left Persia under British and Russian protection and as both Governments had recognised His Son, you did not see how we could acquiesce in the return of the former, and I should, therefore, like to know whether His Excellency thought that it would still be advisable for us to make a communication to His Majesty of a somewhat similar character to that which you had proposed, or whether he had any other suggestion to make. His Excellency replied that, were the ex-Shah still in Europe, he would willingly join in addressing such a warning to His Majesty, but now that he had landed in Persia we were in the presence of an entirely new situation. His Majesty, by landing at Gumish Tepe, had burnt his boats and must pursue his enterprise to the bitter end. It was useless, therefore, for us to make any communication to him, as he would certainly pay no attention to anything we might say. It was perfectly true that we had recognised the present Shah, but this fact did not justify our intervening in the internal affairs of Persia, any more than the fact that we had recognised the ex-Shah would have justified our intervening to prevent his deposition.

I had a further interview with Monsieur Nératow on the following day, when I informed him of the communication which you had instructed me to make to him in your telegram No. 358 of the 19th instant.⁽³⁾ I said that you took a different view to what His Excellency did of the line of conduct to be pursued by the two Governments at the present crisis and considered that, in view of the ex-Shah's return, His Majesty's pension should be stopped and that he should be informed

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent on August 4 to the King; to the Prime Minister; to the Cabinet; to Lord Crewe; and as having been seen at Berlin. A copy was sent to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 355) of July 18, 1911, D. 6 p.m., instructed Sir G. Buchanan to ask the Russian Government to co-operate in informing the ex-Shah that in no circumstances would his return be allowed. It was repeated to Tehran (No. 210). (F.O. 371/1193. 28098/27357/11/34A.)]

⁽³⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 358) of July 19, 1911, instructed Sir G. Buchanan to propose to M. Neratov that the ex-Shah should be informed that he would not be recognized by Russia and Great Britain. It was repeated to Tehran (No. 211). (F.O. 371/1193. 28252/27357/11/34A.) For M. Neratov's reply, *cp. supra*, p. 774, No. 787, note ⁽¹⁾.]

that on no account would the two Governments consent to recognise his return to the throne nor to allow him to remain permanently in Persia.

Monsieur Nératow replied that he had gathered from a telegram which he had received from Count Benckendorff, that there might be a divergence of views between the two Governments but he must, nevertheless, adhere to what he had said to me yesterday. Now that the ex-Shah had taken the field, it would be impossible for him to draw back till his enterprise was crowned with victory or till he had suffered a crushing defeat. In the former case it would be very difficult for us not to recognise him, when once he was reestablished on the throne, nor would it be of any use for us to tell him that we would not allow him to remain permanently in Persia, unless we were prepared to back up our words by deeds and send troops to Persia to enforce our decision. It was, moreover, too late now to warn him that his pension would be stopped, as if this enterprise ended in failure the Mejliss were certain to discontinue it.

I pointed out to His Excellency how necessary it was for us to stand by the Regent, whose high character offered us the only prospect of the establishment of order and good Government in Persia, and said that I feared that His Highness might throw up the sponge if we did not give him the assurances which he had already asked for.

Monsieur Nératow replied that we could hold out no hope to him of any material support, either in the shape of money or of troops; and this was the only kind of support which would be of any service to him. He willingly admitted His Highness's many good qualities, but up to the present he had accomplished nothing, in consequence of the impossible elements with which he had to deal in the Mejliss. On my remarking that it was unfortunate, perhaps, that His Highness could not be given more extended powers, His Excellency said that, under the present régime, it would be impossible to restrict the powers of the Mejliss. If, however, the ex-Shah recovered the Throne there would probably be a revision of the Constitution. His Excellency then repeated that, in his opinion, there was nothing for the two Governments to do but to allow events to take their course. He was strongly opposed to the idea of intervention, as if we were to intervene now, we should probably be forced to intervene again before very long; and unless we were prepared to send troops, we could neither stop the Shah's advance, should he gain the upper hand, nor give any effective support to the present Government.

I said that I had noticed that the "Novoe Vremya," in an article published that morning, had advocated intervention in the event of the lives of Russian subjects being in danger and cited several cases of attacks that had recently been made on them. Monsieur Nératow replied that a Russian officer had been killed as he was riding home from attending a mixed frontier Commission, and that, in view of the general state of insecurity, the question of despatching a Cossack detachment to protect the caravans on the main road had been seriously considered. This idea had now been abandoned as the despatch of troops at the present moment might be interpreted as an intention on the part of Russia to intervene in the struggle that was impending between the present Government and the ex-Shah. His Excellency added that instructions had been sent to the Russian Consuls in Persia to observe a strictly neutral attitude, to keep a careful watch over Russian interests and to hold the "de facto" authorities for the time being responsible for any injuries caused to the persons or property of Russian subjects.

From the general tone of the Russian press it is clear that anything in the shape of an armed intervention in support of the existing régime in Persia would be most unfavourably received in this country. The Liberal press in general deprecates any kind of intervention, while the "Novoe Vremya" only advocates it in the event of the lives of Russian subjects being in danger. On the other hand, the Nationalist organ the "Sviet" warmly welcomes Mohammed Ali's return and strongly protests against the idea of an intervention against him. The reactionary press adopts a somewhat similar attitude. It is, I think, generally felt that, as

Russia abstained from intervening in order to maintain Mohammed Ali on the throne, she cannot now be expected to intervene in support of a Government which has never shown her any friendly disposition and which has utterly failed to maintain order in the country.

I would only add that the suspicions which have been cast on Russia by certain organs of the British press of having been privy to the return of the ex-Shah, have made a bad impression here and are, I believe, entirely unfounded. Whatever negligence may have been shown by the local authorities at Baku in allowing Mohammed Ali to pass unhindered, and with whatever feelings Russian public opinion may view his possible re-establishment on the throne, the news of his landing in Persia came as a complete surprise to the Central Government. Monsieur Nératov would, I am convinced, have loyally supported His Majesty's Government in conveying the suggested warning to His Majesty and would, moreover, have taken precautionary measures to prevent his passage through Russian territory, had not the secrecy and the swiftness, with which Mohammed Ali planned and carried out his return, placed the Russian Government in presence of an accomplished fact.

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

No. 790.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1193.

29485/27357/11/34.

Tel. (No. 217.)

Foreign Office, July 26, 1911, 9 P.M.

Russian Gov[ernmen]t suggest that Russian and British Gov[ernmen]ts should make a declaration at Tehran that as Ex-Shah has returned to Persia contrary to engagements undertaken by him to Persian Gov[ernmen]t and contrary to advice given to him repeatedly by (British) Gov[ernmen]t to abstain from any (Russian)

intrigue in Persia the (British) Gov[ernmen]t recognize that Ex-Shah has forfeited (Russian)

his right to pension assigned to him by protocol. On the other hand the (British) (Russian)

Gov[ernmen]t considers that as soon as Ex-Shah put foot on Persian territory the relations between him and Persian Gov[ernmen]t have assumed the character of an internal Persian Affair in which the (British) Gov[ernmen]t cannot intervene. (Russian)

In consequence the (British) Gov[ernmen]t declares that in the struggle that has (Russian) unhappily occurred in Persia it will observe strict neutrality.⁽²⁾

What is your opinion as to agreeing to make this declaration? Would it help Persian Gov[ernmen]t or the reverse?

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to St. Petersburg (No. 385).]

⁽²⁾ [As the result of Sir G. Barclay's comments (*v. infra*, pp. 781-2, No. 794, and *note* (4)) the last two sentences of the proposed declaration were amended as follows: "On the other hand the British Government consider that ex-Shah being in Persian territory the British Government cannot intervene. In consequence the British Government declare that in the struggle that has unhappily occurred in Persia it will take no part whatever." (F.O. 371/1193. 29698/27357/11/34.)]

No. 791.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.

F.O. 371/1192.

30212/26457/11/34.

(No. 210.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 26, 1911.

I told Count Benckendorff to-day that we could not interfere with the appointment of Major Stokes in Persia, though we should insist that, if he entered the service of the Persian Government, he resigned his commission in our Army.⁽¹⁾

Count Benckendorff pressed me to do more, and to intimate to the Persian Government or to Mr. Shuster the undesirability of making the appointment.

I said that we could not do this. Mr. Shuster was acting without any political motive; he was apparently a very good, businesslike man, and he might throw up his post, if we interfered, and declare that the British Government had made the regeneration of Persia impossible.

I told Count Benckendorff, however, that inasmuch as Major Stokes when appointed would superintend certain things in Persian territory even on the Russian frontier, we could not raise any objection if Russia intimated to the Persian Government, should Major Stokes be appointed, that Russia also must secure some appointment which would ensure that her interests in the region of her frontier were not overlooked.

[I am, &c.]

E. G. [REY].

(¹) [Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 213) of July 21, 1911, D. 5.30 p.m., informed Sir G. Barclay that he "may tell Treasurer-General that Major Stokes will have to resign his commission in the Indian Army before accepting command of the gendarmerie." It was repeated to St Petersburg (No. 369). (F.O. 371/1192. 28369/26457/11/34.) *cp. infra*, p. 782, Nos 795-6; and *cp. Siebert*, p. 106.]

No. 792.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1193.

29931/27357/11/34.

(No. 217.)

Sir,

*St. Petersburg, D. July 27, 1911.**R. July 31, 1911.*

With reference to my despatch No. 212 of the 24th instant,⁽²⁾ I have the honour to report that on receiving your telegram No. 371 of the 22nd instant⁽³⁾ I called on the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs and informed him that, while agreeing with him as to the advisability of refraining from an armed intervention in Persia, you considered that both Russia and England had assumed a certain degree of responsibility towards the present régime. Russia more especially had under the protocol of August 25, 1909,⁽⁴⁾ engaged to take all necessary measures to prevent any political intrigues on the part of the ex-Shah, who was to take up his residence on her territory, and it was therefore in your opinion incumbent on us to make it perfectly clear that we strongly disapproved his present attempt to regain his throne.

(¹) [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent on August 4 to the King; to the Prime Minister; to the Cabinet; to Lord Crewe. A copy was sent to the Director of Military Operations.]

(²) [*v. supra*, pp. 775-7, No. 789.]

(³) [*v. supra*, p. 774, No. 787.]

(⁴) [Sir G. Barclay's despatch (No. 171), D. September 9, R. September 27, 1909, enclosed a copy of a protocol, dated August 25/September 7, 1909, signed by himself and M. Sabline and by the members of the Persian Cabinet. The special obligations undertaken by the Russian Government form part of Article 11. (F.O. 371/814. 35734/Case 2/09/34.)]

We owed this to the Regent and to the Persian Government, and I suggested that we might accomplish this object by assuring them of our full sympathy and moral support.

Monsieur Nératow replied that this would be going further than the Imperial Government was prepared to go, as they could not depart from an attitude of strict non-intervention in the internal affairs of Persia. This was the attitude which they had adopted at the time of the ex-Shah's deposition. In their desire to meet the wishes of His Majesty's Government and to act in close accord with them they had refrained from using their influence to keep Mohamed Ali on the throne and they had even to a certain extent favoured the establishment of the new constitutional régime. This attitude had exposed them to the reproach of having subordinated the interests of Russia to those of England. If they were now to openly side with the existing Government in the impending conflict, they would be reversing their former policy of non-interference and would be severely taken to task by public opinion in this country.

I observed that it seemed to me that in giving their moral support to the Regent and his Government they would be but continuing the policy which they had inaugurated when they consented to the deposition of Mohamed Ali, and would be supporting a Government which they had helped to establish. Monsieur Nératow replied that they had equally recognised and supported Mohamed Ali so long as he occupied the throne, but that they had taken no steps whatever to maintain him in its possession.

I then called His Excellency's attention to the telegrams from Tehran which had appeared in the "Times" and in other British and foreign papers, and said that it seemed that the impression existed in Persia that the Imperial Government could not have been ignorant of the ex-Shah's intentions and that His Majesty could not have passed over Russian territory and crossed the Caspian on a Russian steamer without the knowledge and connivance of the Imperial Government. It had also, I said, been stated that in Russian circles at Teheran satisfaction had been openly expressed at the prospect of the ex-Shah's restoration. Knowing as I did how entirely the Imperial Government had been taken by surprise by Mohamed Ali's sudden return, I regretted very much that such erroneous reports should have found circulation in the British press, but I thought that it was most important that His Excellency should do something to dissipate the false impressions which were evidently entertained at Teheran of the views and attitude of the Russian Government. I should have thought, I said, that it would be easy to instruct Monsieur Poklewski to give such assurances to the Persian Government as would leave them in no doubt as to the sentiments of the Imperial Government.⁽⁵⁾

His Excellency said that it was quite possible that individual Russians at Teheran might have used the language attributed to them; but the Persian Government knew perfectly well that the Russian Government had repeatedly warned Mohamed Ali against engaging in intrigues against them and that they had been on the point of addressing a further serious warning to him, conjointly with His Majesty's Government, on the very eve of his unexpected departure. He could throw no light whatever on the question of how Mohamed Ali had eluded the vigilance of the Russian authorities, as the whole thing was a mystery to him. The Russian Government had, His Excellency declared, already given ample proof that they had nothing whatever to do with His Majesty's return. They had published a statement in the semi-official "Rossia," which ought to have made it clear to everybody that they had been taken completely by surprise. They had instructed their Consuls in Persia to observe an attitude of strict neutrality between the contending parties, and were adhering to a policy of non-intervention. More they could not do. I might, however,

(5) [Sir Edward Grey's despatch (No. 211) of August 2, 1911, approved Sir G. Buchanan's language as reported in this and in his despatch (No. 212) of July 24. *v. supra*, pp. 775-7, No. 789. (F.O. 371/1193. 29931/27357/11/34)]

His Excellency said, assure you that he was no partisan of the ex Shah, that he thought that it was very doubtful whether Mohamed Ali would ever reach Teheran and that if he did he would probably be assassinated before many months had elapsed. He had no desire to see a reversal of the present régime, and he would prefer to see it maintained. It was however quite another thing to make a demonstration in its favour, as he was convinced that any such action on the part of the Imperial Government would react unfavourably on Russian public opinion and would prejudice the interests of the Anglo-Russian understanding by strengthening the hands of those who were always ready to assert that, under it Russian interests were being sacrificed at the behest of England.

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

No. 793.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir A. Nicolson.⁽¹⁾

Private.⁽²⁾

My dear Nicolson,

St. Petersburg, July 27, 1911.

Many thanks for your letter.⁽³⁾

It is most unfortunate that at a moment when we have two such big questions on our hands as those of Morocco and Albania, affairs in Persia should have once more become acute, in consequence of the sudden reappearance of the ex-Shah on the scene. Nobody here can explain how he managed to elude the vigilance of the Russian authorities and to pass unhindered through Russian territory. The Russian Government imagined that he was at Carlsbad or Marienbad, and however much the local authorities may have been to blame, I am convinced that Nératow was taken completely by surprise and that, had he suspected the Shah's design of returning to Persia, he would have taken energetic measures to prevent it. He has, so far as I can judge, been perfectly straightforward in all that he has said and done and he is as much in the dark as we are as to who the persons were who engineered the coup which has been executed with such secrecy and success.

In my conversations with him I have been very careful to avoid saying anything which could lead him to think that we in any way shared the suspicions entertained in certain quarters that Mahomed Ali had acted in connivance with Russia, but I urged him as strongly as I could to give the present Persian Government some assurances of his sympathy and moral support. He contends, however, that Russia must act towards them in precisely the same way as she acted towards Mahomed Ali when the latter was threatened with deposition. He has, he asserts, already made it perfectly clear that the Russian Government had in no way approved or abetted the attempt now being made by the ex-Shah to regain his throne and that a policy of strict non-intervention is imposed on them. He reminded me that there still exists in Russian public opinion a current hostile to an Anglo-Russian understanding, and that if the Government were to do for the present régime in Persia what they had refused to do for the ex-Shah two years ago, they would be accused of bowing to our dictation and of sacrificing the interests of Russia to those of England. This would seriously prejudice the maintenance of a close Anglo-Russian understanding.

Till the present crisis in Persia is settled one way or the other, it will be useless for me to discuss further with Nératow the various points raised by the Shuster-

⁽¹⁾ [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to the King.]

⁽²⁾ [Carnock MSS., Vol. III of 1911.]

⁽³⁾ [Sir A. Nicolson's letter of July 18, 1911, refers to Major Stokes's appointment, but adds nothing of importance to information given elsewhere. Carnock MSS., Vol. III of 1911.]

Mornard controversy and the proposed appointment of Major Stokes. I fear, however, that it will be very difficult to reconcile his views to ours. He is very down on Shuster, who he considers has shown an utter disregard for Russia's interests and for the privileged position which she together with England enjoys in Persia, and I do not think that he will agree to allow Shuster to take the control of the Customs into his own hands. Stokes' appointment does not at all smile on him, and the fact that that officer is going to resign his Commission will not reconcile him or Russian public opinion to what will be represented as an advantage gained by England over Russia. . . .⁽¹⁾

Ever yours,

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

⁽¹⁾ [The rest of the letter discusses the relations between Russia and Austria-Hungary, and between Russia and Germany in general terms, but adds nothing of importance to information given elsewhere.]

No. 794.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1193.
29698/27357/11/34.
Tel. (No. 289.)

Tehran, July 28, 1911.
D. 10.38 A.M.
R. 11 A.M.

Your telegram No. 217.⁽²⁾

Proposed joint declaration is a rejection of Persian Gov[ernmen]t's appeal to the two Powers (see my telegram No. 279)⁽³⁾ and is virtually recognition of ex-Shah's belligerency. I cannot see therefore how it would help Persian Gov[ernmen]t for the moment. In the long run however it would probably work out to their advantage as it would serve as a restraint on over-zealous Russian agents who if no declaration were made at all might consider their hands free.

Logical course for the two Powers, one of whom has undertaken to take effective measures to prevent ex-Shah from intriguing, would be to refrain from using any phrase which might be construed as recognition of his belligerency, at any rate so soon after he has left Russian asylum and merely to declare that they will give him neither material nor moral support, but if we cannot hope to induce Russia to see matter in this light, we had better as a pis aller make proposed declaration.

Should Stokes get his appointment under the Persian Gov[ernmen]t they might order him to the front. Russian Gov[ernmen]t were doubtless contemplating this contingency when they proposed so explicit a declaration of strict neutrality. I do not know how far proposed joint declaration would enable or compel us to prevent Major Stokes from active service against ex-Shah. Russian Gov[ernmen]t who I understand have ruled that Russian officers to the Cossack brigade and other Russian subjects shall not be allowed to take part in conflict, would probably protest against his fighting whether we made declaration or not.

Sent to India.

MINUTES.

I do not see why the Russian Gov[ernmen]t should object to making a declaration that the two Powers will give the ex-Shah neither material nor moral support. Such a step would be quite consistent with neutrality and non-intervention. We might suggest to Count Benckendorff that a clause to this effect should be inserted in the proposed declaration.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to St. Petersburg. Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 777, No. 790.]

⁽³⁾ [Sir G. Barclay's telegram (No. 279) of July 23, 1911, D. 9 P.M., R. 9.30 P.M., reported that the Persian Government had addressed Notes to the British and Russian Legations on the return of the Ex-Shah. They stated that the Persian Government hoped that they would receive the moral support of Great Britain and Russia. (F.O. 371/1193. 28865/27357/11/34.)]

On the other hand, I do not see wherein the declaration, as it now stands, recognises the ex-Shah's belligerency. To say that the question is now an internal Persian affair and that therefore we cannot interfere seems quite a different thing from a recognition of belligerency.

As for Major Stokes (though he has nothing to do with the declaration), I do not see how we can prevent him from fighting if he is no longer a British Officer. The officers of the Cossack Brigade are in a different position, for they are still in the Russian Army.

H. N.

July 28, 1911

I do not think that it would be of any use to ask the Russian Gov[ernmen]t to add a clause as suggested: besides "strict neutrality" connotes no material or moral support being given—As to Major Stokes I do not think he has yet ceased to be Mil[itar]y Attache or resigned his commission in the Army. We might telegraph to Sir G. Barclay. . . .⁽¹⁾

A. N.

E. G.

⁽¹⁾ [The draft of the immediately succeeding document followed here. The final sentence was added by Sir Edward Grey. A further telegram drafted by Sir Edward Grey then followed authorizing Sir G. Barclay to make a declaration to the Persian Government in the terms of telegram (No. 217) amended (*v supra*, p. 777, No. 790, and *note* ⁽²⁾) if his Russian colleague were similarly instructed. This telegram (No. 220) was sent on July 28, 1911, D. 6.45, and was repeated to St Petersburg (No. 393).]

No. 795.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.

F.O. 371/1193.

29698/27357/11/34.

Tel. (No. 219.)

Foreign Office, July 28, 1911.

Your tel[egram] No. 289.⁽¹⁾

Major Stokes sh[oul]d be given clearly to understand that he must resign his comm[issio]n in the Army before taking service or duties of any kind under the Persian Gov[ernmen]t. How are his proposed services under Treasurer-General compatible with his taking the field in a military capacity? It might also be pointed out to Persian Gov[ernmen]t that if Stokes is employed by them in active military operations in Persia it may provide excuse for Russian officers taking active part on other side.

⁽¹⁾ [*v. immediately preceding document.*]

No. 796.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1192.

30361/26457/11/34.

Tel. (No. 221.)

Foreign Office, August 1, 1911. 3.30 p.m.

You should inform the Persian Gov[ernmen]t that Major Stokes has been required to resign his commission before taking up his app[ointmen]t under the Treasurer-Gen[era]l. This app[ointmen]t has been made irrespective of H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment], who would have preferred to have been first consulted in the matter. It should be pointed out to the Persian Gov[ernmen]t that the employment of Major Stokes in military service in any active operations in the North of Persia may involve political considerations and that H[is] M[ajesty's] Gov[ernmen]t cannot deprecate objections that may be taken to it.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to St Petersburg (No. 403). It was based upon Sir A. Nicolson's draft made as the result of a conversation with Count Benckendorff on July 31.]

No. 797.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1192.

St. Petersburg, August 2, 1911.

30512/26457/11/34.

D. 7·20 P.M.

Tel. (No. 172.)

R. 9·15 P.M.

Your telegram No. 408.⁽²⁾

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs asked me to-day what was happening with regard to Major Stokes, and said that the Russian Minister at Tehran had informed the Persian Government that, in the event of his employment in the Treasury, Russia would demand an equivalent in the north.

I communicated to his Excellency the instructions sent to Sir G. Barclay, adding that, if once Major Stokes resigned his commission, His Majesty's Government could no longer control his action.

His Excellency evidently considers that his employment in any capacity in the Persian service at the present moment is inopportune. Speaking of the possibility of his taking part in active operations against the ex-Shah, his Excellency said that when two years ago a Russian officer had sent in his resignation, in order to take service with the Nationalists, the Russian Government had refused to accept it, and had recalled him to Russia.

(Sent to Tehran.)

MINUTES.

I should hardly think that Mr Shuster would contemplate allowing the commander of his Treasury gendarmerie to be employed in fighting the ex-Shah, but if he does I do not see that we can control Major Stokes when he has once resigned. Nor can we, in practice, refuse to accept his resignation if he wishes to tender it.

H. N.

Aug[ust] 3, 1911.

A. N.

Taking service "with the Nationalists" doesn't make it clear whether it was taking service with a Gov[ernment] that Russia had recognized.

E. G.

(¹) [Copies of this telegram were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations]

(²) [v. immediately preceding document, and note (¹).]

No. 798.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1192.

St. Petersburg, August 4, 1911.

30826/26457/11/34.

D. 8·10 P.M.

Tel. (No. 175.)

R. 11 P.M.

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, to whom I spoke this afternoon in the sense of your telegram No. 411⁽²⁾, said that Russia had already protested and had warned the Persian Government that they would require some sort of equivalent in the north.⁽³⁾ While obliged for your proffered support of any objections which Russia might make to the employment of Major Stokes in the north, he feared that protest of this kind might provoke retort that the Persian Government were not concerned

(¹) [Copies of this telegram were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations]

(²) [Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 411) of August 3, 1911, D. 10 P.M., informed Sir G. Buchanan that His Majesty's Government considered that the Russian objection to the employment of Major Stokes in North Persia was admissible. (F.O. 371/1192. 30667/26457/11/34.)]

(³) [*cp. infra*, p. 785, No. 799, note (¹), where reference is made to the Russian protest of July 28.]

with division of Persia into spheres of influence under the Anglo-Russian Agreement. He would, however, think over the matter and see if it was possible to find a formula that would get over this difficulty and that would, at the same time, have the support of His Majesty's Government.

His Excellency did not conceal embarrassment and preoccupation which the incident was causing him. He personally understands that His Majesty's Government are not behind Major Stokes, but fears that Russian public opinion will place different interpretation on the matter. He said that at a moment when the Persian Government were fighting for their existence they would not trouble about the organisation of the Treasury gendarmerie and would employ Stokes to fight the ex-Shah. This ought to be prevented at all costs, and he asked whether His Majesty's Government could not recall Stokes temporarily to London on some service of the frontier. He again cited the incident, incorrectly reported in my telegram No. 172⁽⁴⁾ as having occurred two years ago, of the recall last year of the Russian officer Darab Mirza, who had wanted to take service against the Tehran Government.

I told him that His Majesty's Government could not control Stokes's movements when once he had resigned his commission, but his Excellency begged me to try and see if something could not be done.

Reactionary press welcomes what it terms (two groups undecypherable: ? violation of) Anglo-Russian Agreement, as Russia, it asserts, will now be free to interfere actively. I fear that it will be very difficult for the Russian Government to resist doing something should Stokes take part in any military operations against the ex-Shah.

(Sent to Tehran.)

MINUTE.

It is of great importance not to give any handle to the reactionary Press in Russia.

There is, however, nothing to show that Major Stokes will be employed against the Shah. The Treasury Gendarmerie is not yet formed. If he is sent against the Shah, it will be in another capacity and he will be in command of Persian troops.

L. M.

(⁴) [v. immediately preceding document.]

No. 799.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 871/1192.

30953/26457/11/34A.

St. Petersburg, D. August 5, 1911, 8.32 P.M.

Tel. (No. 176.) Urgent.

R. August 6, 1911, 8 A.M.

My immediately preceding telegram.⁽²⁾

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs sent for me this afternoon and said that the more he reflected on Major Stokes's appointment the more he trusted that you might still be able to recall that officer temporarily.⁽³⁾ There must, he thought, be some formalities to be gone through that might serve to prevent immediate effect being given to his resignation.

He regretted the incident because it showed to the world a serious disagreement between the two Governments, while a false interpretation would inevitably be put

(¹) [Copies of this telegram were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

(²) [v. immediately preceding document.]

(³) [Sir G. Buchanan sent also a private telegram in connection with that printed above, on August 6, D. 7.45 P.M., R. 10 P.M., in which he said that "unless we give some satisfaction to Russia serious breach may be made in Anglo-Russian understanding." He then asked, if His Majesty's Government could not recall Major Stokes temporarily, whether it would be possible to bring pressure to bear on him to withdraw his resignation from the Indian Army, as his appointment would cause serious embarrassment to His Majesty's Government and expose Persia to Russian exasperation in the north. Grey MSS., Vol. 35. (F.O. 371/1192. 30953/26457/11/34A.)]

on it here. Appointment was, moreover, a contravention of the principle on which the two Governments had hitherto acted, namely, that no subject of a European Great Power should be allowed to occupy any important post in the Persian service. If you were unable to act on his suggestion it would be absolutely necessary to take some step that would give satisfaction to Russian public opinion and at the same time demonstrate solidarity existing between the two Governments in Persia. He suggests that Russian Minister at Tehran should be instructed to address note to the Persian Government in the following sense:—

Russian Government protest against proposed appointment of Major Stokes to create a gendarmerie which will act in North Persia as well as elsewhere as being incompatible with their interests. Appointment if made would be regarded as an unfriendly act, and the Russian Government reserve right to take measures which they find necessary to safeguard their interests in North Persia.

British Minister, he further suggests, should at the same time address note to the Persian Government stating that His Majesty's Government concur entirely in the Russian note, and that, while regretting that Major Stokes was invited to enter Persian service without their knowledge, they recognise Russia's right to take steps which she may judge necessary to safeguard her interests in North Persia.

I said I thought that it might be difficult for His Majesty's Government to express their concurrence in a note which virtually threatened intervention, and I suggested a milder and more conciliatory formula. I failed, however, to move his Excellency, who remarked that, if Russian interests were threatened, Government would be obliged to intervene.

Russian Ambassador will be instructed to speak to you on Monday,⁽⁴⁾ and his Excellency is most anxious to have a reply before he sees the Emperor on Tuesday.
(Sent to Tehran.)

⁽⁴⁾ [No record of this conversation can be traced, but, on August 11, M. Sevastopoulo left at the Foreign Office a revised *projet* of the proposed Russian declaration. It is minuted by Sir Edward Grey: "This is a declaration modified by some suggestions of mine, which the Russians may make at Teheran: but they have not yet decided to make it. E. G." The revised text is as follows: "Me référant à la déclaration faite par moi au Ministre des Affaires Etrangères le 15/28 Juillet a[nnée] c[ourante] j'ai l'honneur, d'ordre de mon Gouvernement, de porter à la connaissance du Gouvernement Persan que le Gouvernement Impérial pour des raisons expliquées en son temps au Gouvernement Persan considère l'engagement par ce dernier du major Stokes comme chef d'une force armée destinée à agir dans le Nord de la Perse et dite gendarmerie pour la perception des impôts, comme incompatible avec ses intérêts et je suis chargé de protester contre cette nomination. Le cas échéant le Gouvernement Impérial se réserverait de pourvoir lui-même aux mesures qu'il jugerait nécessaire pour la sauvegarde de ses intérêts dans le Nord de la Perse." (F.O. 371/1192. 32339/26457/11/34)]

No. 800.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1192.

30953/26457/11/34A.

Tel. (No. 226.)

Foreign Office, August 7, 1911, 2.30 P.M.

In view of Sir G. Buchanan's No. 176⁽²⁾ repeated to you from St. Petersburg it is clear that appointment of Stokes to control gendarmerie in North of Persia will raise a serious political question. You should warn Persian Gov[ernment] that unless Major Stokes is not to be employed in North of Persia they ought not to persist in the appointment, and, if they do persist we shall recognize right of Russia to take what steps she thinks necessary to safeguard her interests in North Persia.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to St. Petersburg (No. 417)]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

No. 801.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1192.

30953/26457/11/34.

Tel. (No. 227.)

Foreign Office, August 7, 1911, 2.30 P.M.

My telegram No. 226.⁽²⁾

You should inform Stokes of what you are instructed to say to Persian Gov[ernmen]t. Russian Gov[ernmen]t are as much within their right in protesting against his employment to control gendarmerie in North as we should be in protesting against employment of Russians to control Southern trade routes. It will be impossible for Persian Gov[ernmen]t to uphold appointment against Russian intervention and we cannot deprecate intervention against it unless appointment is restricted to South.

I am enquiring of India Office whether there is any means of suspending acceptance of Stokes' resignation. Unless you have already done so do not make any communication of acceptance of resignation to him.

(1) [This telegram was repeated to St. Petersburg (No. 418, Confidential).]

(2) [v. immediately preceding document.]

No. 802.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1192.

30953/26457/11/34A.

Tel. (No. 419.)

Foreign Office, August 7, 1911, 2.30 P.M.

You should inform acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] of substance of my telegram No. 226 to Sir G. Barclay.⁽²⁾

As we pressed Persian Gov[ernmen]t to organize a force under British officers to protect Southern Trade Routes last winter, a fact of which I think Russian Gov[ernmen]t were aware and to which they made no objection, I cannot deprecate employment of Major Stokes by Persian Gov[ernmen]t in any part of Persia. But I agree that it would be a breach of the spirit of Anglo-Russian Convention, if we were in any way to support Stokes' employment in North of Persia or deprecate Russian objections to it.

You may tell Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] that I am enquiring whether his suggestion in first paragraph of your telegram No. 176⁽³⁾ is feasible, and meanwhile we may await result of telegram No. 226 to Sir G. Barclay.⁽²⁾

(1) [This telegram was repeated to Tehran (No 228).]

(2) [v. *supra*, p. 785, No. 800.]

(3) [v. *supra*, pp. 784-5, No. 799.]

No. 803.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1192.

31326/26457/11/34.

Tel. (No. 178.)

St. Petersburg, August 8, 1911.

D. 7.10 P.M.

R. 9.30 P.M.

Your telegram No. 419.⁽²⁾

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, with whom I had a long conversation this afternoon, is still very occupied as to the consequences which the Stokes incident

(1) [Copies of this telegram were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

(2) [v. immediately preceding document.]

may have unless some moral satisfaction can be given to Russian public opinion. He doubts whether the Persian Government will consent to modify Stokes's original contract, in spite of the warning which Sir G. Barclay has been instructed to address to them.⁽³⁾

I told him that I did not see what more you could do at present and that we must now await the answer of the Persian Government. He replied that it was not so much Persian Government that he was thinking of as public opinion here. I then enquired whether he had any suggestion to make?

His Excellency thereupon said that, supposing the Persian Government did agree to confine Major Stokes's command to the south, it would be difficult to prevent them from eventually employing the gendarmerie thus formed with or without their commander in the north, and he thought that His Majesty's Government might tranquillise Russian public opinion by publicly stating that under no circumstances would this southern gendarmerie be utilised for service in the north.

I observed that, though it might be possible for you to say that Major Stokes's services would not be made use of in the north, it would be very difficult, in my opinion, to declare that Persian Government might not ever avail themselves of any forces of which they might dispose to put down disorders in some other part of the country should the situation require it.

His Excellency then suggested that His Majesty's Government might, in the event of Major Stokes being entrusted with the command of a southern gendarmerie, announce their readiness to support any eventual demand which the Russian Government might make that the organisation of a northern gendarmerie should be confided to either a Russian officer or to the subject of a minor Power whom Russia might propose. I said that I personally preferred this suggestion to the one which he had previously made, but that I could not answer for His Majesty's Government.

Reverting subsequently to the possibility of the Persian Government persisting in giving Major Stokes command of a national gendarmerie, his Excellency suggested that His Majesty's Government might in that case declare that they would support Russia's claim to some similar appointment, such as that of chief of the staff, being given to a Russian officer. In reply to my remark that I feared that the Persian Government would never consent to this, his Excellency said that Russia had no intention of putting it forward at present. It was only a possible eventuality, and all that he wanted at present was that you should, either in the House of Commons or in the press, make some statement that would calm public opinion in Russia.

(Sent to Tehran.)

MINUTE.

A tranquillising statement, such as that suggested in the last paragraph, was made yesterday by the Secretary of State⁽⁴⁾

Everybody, including the Russian Gov[ernmen]t, appear to assume that the gendarmerie are to be used to put down disorders and even to repel the Ex-Shah whereas their real purpose is to assist in the collection of revenue.

H. N.

Aug[ust] 9, 1911.

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 785, No. 800.]

⁽⁴⁾ [In reply to a question asked by the Earl of Ronaldshay, in the House of Commons on August 8, regarding the appointment of Major Stokes, Sir Edward Grey said: "I understand that Major Stokes has been offered an appointment by the Persian Government. It cannot have the approval of His Majesty's Government unless the conditions of the appointment are consistent with the terms and the spirit of the Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1907." *Parl. Deb., 5th Ser.*, (House of Commons), Vol. 29, p. 939. A telegram (No. 427) was sent to Sir G. Buchanan on August 9, 1911, D. 11 p.m., instructing him to inform M. Neratov of Sir Edward Grey's statement in the House of Commons, and to let him know that the appointment of Major Stokes was in suspense pending the Persian answer, but that if it were not dropped altogether, His Majesty's Government were prepared to support the demand by Russia as stated above for a northern gendarmerie. In Sir Edward Grey's opinion the best solution would be the appointment of an officer, the subject of a neutral Power, to command the whole Persian gendarmerie. Count Benckendorff was informed of this telegram and it was repeated to Tehran (No. 233) on August 14. (F.O. 371/1192. 31326/26457/11/34.)]

No. 804.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 371/1192.

33757/26457/11/34.

(No. 149.) Confidential.

Gulahck, D. August 9, 1911.

R. August 28, 1911.

Sir,

I have the honour to transmit herein copy of a letter from Mr. Shuster, the substance of which I had the honour to communicate to you in my telegram No. 322⁽¹⁾ of this evening respecting his desire to appoint Major Stokes to organise the Treasury Gendarmerie.

I have, &c.

G. BARCLAY.

Enclosure in No. 804.

Mr. Shuster to Sir G. Barclay.

Purely Personal.

Dear Sir George.

Tehran, August 8, 1911.

I beg leave to address you, unofficially, on a subject of great importance to my work here. I have been intensely surprised to learn this evening that your Government has conveyed to the Persian Foreign Minister a note of warning or protest against my proposed employment of Major Stokes in the Treasury gendarmerie. You are doubtless aware of the course of this matter up to the present. Need I say that in view of the tone of the communication which your Government authorized you to address to me on July 22 last,⁽²⁾ in effect that Major Stokes could accept the position upon resigning from the Indian Army, the apparent volte-face indicated by their note of to-day is almost incomprehensible.

I recognize that I would have no right to say such things to you in an official communication, and nothing is further from my thoughts than to give offence to anyone, but does your Government quite realize the position in which it is placing me before the Persian people and their Government in now suddenly joining with another Power to prevent the exercise of the most elemental act of sovereignty by this country whose independence and integrity both of those foreign Powers have solemnly pledged themselves, jointly and severally, to respect?

My personal feelings are of no importance but the success or failure of my mission here is of moment both to Persia, which entrusted her financial affairs to my care and to my countrymen who are not unnaturally interested in the creditable accomplishment of my task.

Before accepting this work I was given clearly to understand that neither of the two principal Powers having interests here offered any objection to my undertaking it, and surely such a statement was something more than an empty pledge.

No one, I am assured, knows better than yourself that the choice of Major Stokes was actuated by no political motive in the faintest degree, and no thinking person could suspect me of any intention to engage in political jobbery here,—a thing which would only make me ridiculous and spell absolute ruin for my work.

What then am I to think when I see the first vital step which I undertake in the task of bringing order out of chaos here obstructed and relentlessly opposed by the very two nations who have time and again professed their sincere desire to see the progress and prosperity of the stricken country which I am seeking to serve?

(¹) [Sir G. Barclay's telegram (No. 322) of August 9, 1911, D. 11.15 A.M., R. 11.45 A.M., is not reproduced, as the substance is given in the enclosure to this despatch. (F.O. 371/1192. 31541/26457/11/34.) Sir Edward Grey's reply, sent before the receipt of the above despatch, is given *infra*, p. 795, No. 808.]

(²) [*v. supra*, p. 778, No. 791, and note (¹)]

Does your Foreign Office fully realize that in adopting its most recent attitude in this affair it is inevitably producing the impression on the Persian people that it is in reality opposed to the successful accomplishment of my work, in addition to forcing me to assume that I can count on no friendly moral assistance from your Government in a vital matter of this kind?

If this were a normal place where well-trained, capable and experienced men could be had in comparative abundance, the result (though not the principle of your Government's objection) might not be so bad but here where, as you know, good men are extremely scarce, the attitude adopted amounts to a virtual veto of my efforts and a nullification of my chances of success.

I hope and trust that in some manner your Government may be brought to see the matter in this light, apart from what I am frank to say seems to me a totally uncalled-for interference in the purely routine and internal affairs of the financial organization which I am endeavouring to build up.

Personally, I feel so strongly on the subject that I am forced to contemplate the necessity of setting right my own countrymen, at least, with a formal public statement of all my experiences in this connection since arriving in Tehran. Needless to say, such a course would be much to my regret, but there is such a thing as just dealing even between Governments and individuals, and certainly in this case I feel that my own record is sufficiently clear to bear the light of the most thorough inspection.

Please pardon me for writing you thus freely, but I know you will acquit me of any desire to offend or to increase the perplexities of your situation. Unfortunately, we all appear to have our peculiar difficulties in this strange land, and the Stokes case happens likewise to be one of mine.

With, &c.

W. MORGAN SHUSTER,

Treasurer-General of Persia.

No. 805.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1192.

31856/26457/11/34.

(No. 228.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, D. August 9, 1911.

R. August 14, 1911.

I have in previous despatches had the honour to report on the language held by the Russian press on the subject of the appointment of Major Stokes to command the Gendarmerie which the Persian Government propose to organise for Treasury purposes. Even such an anglophil journal as the "Novoe Vremya" has taken His Majesty's Government severely to task for allowing a former Military Attaché to resign his commission in order to assume the command of a force whose operations will extend over the Northern Zone especially placed under Russian influence by the 1907 Agreement, or to take an active part in an internal conflict that is being waged outside the sphere of British influence. Such an appointment, constituting as it would an infraction of the aforesaid agreement, would, the "Novoe Vremya" apprehends seriously prejudice the harmonious working of the Anglo-Russian Understanding. Other papers representing the views of reactionary and germanophil circles have openly declared that now that England has shown her cards Russia has acquired a free hand and is at liberty to intervene by force in northern Persia for the protection of her interests. In official circles the appointment has been no

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Cabinet; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe. A copy was sent to the Director of Military Operations.]

less strongly condemned on its merits, though it is perfectly understood that His Majesty's Government are innocent of the Machiavellian designs imputed to them in other quarters, of stealing a march on the Russian Government and gaining a foothold in the Russian sphere in Northern Persia.

When Mr. Shuster early in July decided to entrust to Major Stokes the task of organising a Treasury Gendarmerie, whose operations would embrace the whole of Persia, I explained to Monsieur Nératow the great benefits likely to be derived from the creation of such a force, as well as the special qualifications possessed by Major Stokes for organising and commanding it. Monsieur Nératow, in reply, expressed himself favourable to the idea of a Gendarmerie of this description, but took exception to its being placed under the command of a British Officer. He suggested that the command should either be split up and shared by a British and a Russian officer or that it should be entrusted to a subject of one of the minor Powers, such as Sweden. The fact, moreover, that the appointment was being offered to Major Stokes by Mr. Shuster who had already incurred his serious displeasure by the attitude which he had taken up towards the Customs Administrator, without previous consultation with the Russian and British Governments, did not predispose His Excellency in its favour. The unexpected turn which Persian affairs took in consequence of Mohammad Ali's sudden return, distracted Monsieur Nératow's attention for a time to other matters and His Excellency was at first under the impression that the grave internal crisis with which the Persian Government was confronted would cause the two questions of the Mornard-Shuster dispute respecting the Customs Administration and of the projected Treasury Gendarmerie to fall temporarily into abeyance. When, however, it became evident from the decision taken by the Mejliss respecting the salary to be allotted to Major Stokes on his appointment that the Persian Government were determined to avail themselves of his services in some form or another and that they would in all probability employ him to direct the military operations about to be taken against the ex-Shah in northern Persia, His Excellency caused representations to be made on the subject to His Majesty's Government through the Russian Ambassador in London.

It was not, however, till the 2nd of this month that Monsieur Nératow again referred to the matter in conversation with me. After enquiring if I could tell him how the question stood at that moment, His Excellency told me that the Russian Minister at Tehran had already informed the Persian Government that, in the event of Major Stokes being entrusted with the organisation of the projected Gendarmerie, Russia would demand something of an analogous nature for herself. Having received that morning your telegram No. 221 of the 1st instant to Sir George Barclay,⁽²⁾ I explained to Monsieur Nératow that Major Stokes's appointment had been made irrespective of His Majesty's Government and that they would have preferred that the Persian Government should have first consulted them in the matter. Sir George Barclay, I said, had now been instructed to inform the Persian Government that Major Stokes had been required to resign his commission before taking up his appointment and to point out to them that, as his employment in any active operations in northern Persia might involve political considerations, His Majesty's Government could not deprecate the objections that might be taken to it. I added that, when once Major Stokes had resigned his commission His Majesty's Government could exercise no control over his action.

These explanations by no means satisfied Monsieur Nératow, who expressed himself in a manner which showed that he regarded Major Stokes' appointment as most inopportune at the present moment. Referring to the possibility of that officer being employed in active operations against the ex-Shah, His Excellency drew my attention to the action taken by Russia last year in the case of the Persian Prince Darab Mirza, who was then serving in the Russian Army and commanding

(²) [*v. supra*, p. 782, No. 796]

a Sotnia of Cossacks at Kazvin. Having expressed a desire to resign his commission, and having subsequently attempted to raise a revolt against the present Government, Darab Mirza had been placed under arrest and sent to Russia; and His Excellency evidently wished to convey to me that the proper course for His Majesty's Government to pursue in Major Stokes' case was to refuse to accept his resignation and to recall him to England.

After the publication of the article in the "Novoe Vremya," of which I had the honour to forward a translation in my despatch No. 225 of the 3rd instant,⁽³⁾ I again called on Monsieur Nératow and, in accordance with the instructions conveyed to me in your telegram No. 411 of the 3rd instant,⁽⁴⁾ explained that it was very difficult, if not impossible, for His Majesty's Government to prevent Major Stokes taking service under the Persian Government, if once he resigned his commission. You considered, however, that the Russian Government were entitled to object to his being employed in north Persia and that, should they wish you to do so, you would instruct Sir George Barclay to inform the Persian Government that His Majesty's Government could not take exception to such an objection, and that the Persian Government would do well to take it into account.

While expressing his thanks for this communication Monsieur Nératow said that he feared that a protest of this kind on the part of the Russian Government would expose them to the retort that the Persian Government were in no way concerned with the Anglo-Russian Agreement under which Persia had been divided into a British and a Russian sphere of influence. He would, however, think over the matter and see whether it was possible to find a formula which would get over this difficulty and which would at the same time command the support of His Majesty's Government.

Monsieur Nératow sent for me on the following day and again spoke of the grave anxiety which this incident was causing him. He regretted it more especially because it would show to the world that a serious disagreement had arisen between the two Governments and because Russian public opinion would believe that His Majesty's Government were supporting Major Stokes's appointment out of interested motives. Such an appointment was, moreover, a contravention of the principle on which the two Governments had hitherto acted, namely—that no subject of a European Great Power should be allowed to occupy any important post in the Persian service. He pointed out that at a moment when the Persian Government were engaged in a struggle for their very existence, they would not give a thought to the projected Treasury Gendarmerie and would employ Stokes and any forces that he might organise to fight the ex-Shah in Northern Persia. This, he thought, ought to be prevented at all costs and he repeated the suggestion which he had made to me on the previous day, that His Majesty's Government should recall Major Stokes temporarily to London. There must, he imagined, be some formalities to be gone through before Major Stokes could leave the army, that would serve as a pretext for such a step. If, however, His Majesty's Government were unable to act on this suggestion it would be absolutely necessary that the two Governments should take some step that, while giving satisfaction to public opinion in this country, would demonstrate the solidarity of their interests in Persia.

His Excellency then read to me the draft of the two accompanying Notes which he suggested that the British and Russian Ministers at Tehran should respectively address to the Persian Government.⁽⁵⁾ The Russian Note would enter a protest against Major Stokes's appointment and would state that Russia would regard it as an unfriendly act and would reserve to herself the right of taking such measures as she might deem necessary to safeguard her interests in Persia. The

(3) [Not reproduced. The article referred to pointed out the danger to the Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1907 if Major Stokes were appointed to command the new Persian Treasury gendarmerie. (F.O. 371/1192. 31130/26457/11/34.)]

(4) [v. *supra*, p. 783, No. 798, note (2).]

(5) [Not reproduced, as the contents of the notes are sufficiently indicated above.]

British Note would express entire concurrence in the terms of the Russian Note and would recognise Russia's right to take the necessary steps to protect her interests.

I pointed out that it might be difficult for His Majesty's Government to express entire concurrence in a Note which virtually threatened armed intervention and suggested that the Russian Government might protest against the employment of Major Stokes in northern Persia and at the same time express their readiness to place at the disposal of the Persian Government the services of a Russian officer to organise a gendarmerie for the maintenance of order in those provinces. Monsieur Nératow, however, adhered to the general tenor of his draft Note, remarking that if Russian interests were threatened, the Imperial Government would be obliged to intervene.

On the receipt of your telegram No. 419 of the 7th instant^(*) I informed Monsieur Nératow that Sir George Barclay had been instructed to warn the Persian Government that they ought not to persist in engaging Major Stokes, except on the understanding that he was not to be employed in northern Persia and that, if they did so persist, His Majesty's Government would recognise the right of Russia to take what steps she thinks necessary to safeguard her interests. I added that, in view of the pressure which we had brought to bear on the Persian Government last year to organise a force under British officers for the purpose of protecting the southern Trade Routes, we could not deprecate the employment of Major Stokes in those Provinces, but that you recognised that it would be contrary to the spirit of the Anglo-Russian Convention for His Majesty's Government to support that officer's employment in northern Persia or to deprecate any objections which Russia might take to it.

In the course of the conversation which ensued Monsieur Nératow said that he feared that the Persian Government would insist on adhering to the terms of the original contract which they had made with Major Stokes. What, however, he was most anxious to obtain from His Majesty's Government at the present moment was some statement that would give a moral satisfaction to Russian public opinion and that would counteract the very unfavourable impression which this incident had created. Supposing that the Persian Government did agree not to avail themselves of Major Stokes's services outside the southern provinces, there was no guarantee that the gendarmerie, which he was going to organise in those provinces, might not eventually be dispatched on service to the North. Would His Majesty's Government, he asked, make a statement to the effect that this would not be allowed. I said that they might possibly give an assurance that Major Stokes would not be employed in the North, but that they could not take any engagement as regarded the Gendarmerie force which he might have organised. Monsieur Nératow replied that this would not be sufficient and that what he wanted was an assurance that the Gendarmerie, which was a purely local force, should not be moved from the South to the North. I pointed out that it would be impossible for you to defend in Parliament an assurance that the Persian Government would not be allowed to dispose of the forces, of which it might dispose in the South, for service in the North, should the situation require it. His Excellency admitted that this would no doubt be difficult and then suggested that, in the event of the command of the southern Gendarmerie being entrusted to Major Stokes you should declare your readiness to support Russia, should she eventually demand that the organisation of a northern Gendarmerie should be given either to a Russian officer or to the subject of some minor Power, whom the Russian Government might put forward as a candidate. I said that I personally much preferred this suggestion to the one which His Excellency had previously made, but that I could not answer for His Majesty's Government.

Monsieur Nératow then proceeded to say that, should, as he expected, the Persian Government persist in placing Major Stokes in command of a national

(*) [v. *supra*, p. 786, No. 802.]

Gendarmerie for the whole of Persia he hoped that you would promise to support any eventual demand which Russia might put forward for some appointment of an analogous character being given to a Russian Officer. I asked whether he had any particular appointment in his mind's eye. His Excellency replied that the appointment of a Russian officer as Chief of the Staff might perhaps answer the purpose. I observed that I thought that there was but very little likelihood of the Persian Government complying with such a demand under the present circumstances. Monsieur Nératow thereupon explained that the Russian Government had no intention of putting forward any such request at this moment. He was not just now thinking so much of the Persian Government as of His Majesty's Government. What he desired was that you should, either by a statement in Parliament or by a communiqué in the Press, make a declaration of the readiness of His Majesty's Government to support any demand for compensation that the Russian Government might eventually put forward in order that Russian public opinion might receive some moral satisfaction.

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

MINUTES.

This despatch and 31858(?) give a good summary of the situation regarding this question up to Aug[ust] 9.

It is evident that public opinion in Russia is strongly excited and that the Germanophil and reactionary party are using the incident to discredit the Anglo-Russian understanding.

It is principally this, I think, that disquiets M. Nératow, who acquits H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] of any blame for the offer to Major Stokes.

The matter has now however advanced a stage further and it therefore seems unnecessary to comment at length on this despatch.

Approve Sir G. Buchanan's language.(8)

H. N.

Aug[ust] 14, 1911.

L. M.

E. G.

(7) [Sir G. Buchanan's despatch (No. 230), D. August 9, R. August 14, 1911, is not reproduced, as it merely summarized Russian press opinion. (F.O. 371/1192. 31858/26457/11/34.)]

(8) [Sir Edward Grey's despatch (No. 226) of August 18, 1911, approved Sir G. Buchanan's language. (F.O. 371/1192. 31856/26457/11/34.)]

No. 806.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir A. Nicolson.(1)

Private.(2)

My dear Nicolson,

St. Petersburg, August 9, 1911.

... (3) Though from the very outset Nératow was strongly opposed to the idea of Major Stokes being given the command of a Gendarmerie, whose operations might extend to the Russian sphere in northern Persia, he was apparently under the impression that the Persian Government would be too much occupied fighting Mohammed Ali to think of giving effect to the scheme for a Treasury Gendarmerie. It was not till Wednesday in last week that he reverted to the subject in conversa-

(1) [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe. The endorsement is initialled by Sir Edward Grey.]

(2) [Carnock MSS., Vol. III of 1911.]

(3) [The first paragraph of this letter refers to Sir G. Buchanan's conversations with M. Nératow on Albanian and Moroccan questions, but adds nothing of importance to information given elsewhere.]

tion with me and hinted that we ought to act as did the Russian Government in a somewhat similar case last year and recall Stokes to England. . . .⁽¹⁾

It is most unfortunate that such an incident should have occurred at a moment when it seems more than ever necessary for us to maintain the Anglo-Russian understanding intact. Whatever may be the outcome of the Franco-German negotiations, it will be some time before Germany either forgives or forgets the part which we have played in the international drama which Kiderlen so suddenly improvised and we cannot therefore afford to alienate Russian sympathy in ever so slight a degree. I still hope that Stokes will, if he has any slight feeling, reconsider his decision and withdraw his resignation, more especially after the explanations which Barclay has been instructed to give him. If not we must try and give Russia some sort of moral satisfaction such as Nératow asks for. It is of course quite on the cards that Mohammed Ali may enter Tehran in another week or so and that we shall be confronted with an entirely new situation. Russian influence in Persia will then be once more in the ascendant and it is therefore advisable, both in our interests and in those of Persia, that she should be predisposed to act cordially with us, should the Shah, as he undoubtedly will, give us cause for complaint. . . .⁽⁵⁾

Ever yours,
GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

⁽⁴⁾ [The omitted paragraphs refer to M. Nératow's unfavourable attitude towards the appointment of Major Stokes, already sufficiently explained elsewhere.]

⁽⁵⁾ [The rest of the letter refers to the Russo-German Agreement, but adds nothing of importance to information given elsewhere.]

No. 807.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1192.

St. Petersburg, August 11, 1911.

31708/26457/11/34A.

D. 3-18 P.M.

Tel. (No. 180.)

R. 5-5 P.M.

I spoke to Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs yesterday in the terms of your telegram No. 427.⁽²⁾

His Excellency remarked that support promised by His Majesty's Government to Russian demand respecting northern gendarmerie met case of Major Stokes's appointment being restricted to south, but said nothing of what would be done should that appointment not be so restricted.

I said that support which you had promised to Russia virtually covered both cases, as it would render it impossible for Major Stokes to extend his operations to the north.

His Excellency did not seem quite satisfied, and asked whether Major Stokes had been informed of the views of His Majesty's Government on this question, as he could not understand why pressure could not be brought to bear on him to make him relinquish appointment.

His Excellency begged me to let him know as soon as you had received a reply from the Persian Government, as he desired that the incident might be closed as soon as possible.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Tehran (as No. 232).]

⁽²⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 427) of August 9, 1911, D. 11 P.M., instructed Sir G. Buchanan to inform the Russian Government that His Majesty's Government were ready to support a demand that the gendarmerie employed in the north of Persia should be under the control of a Russian officer. (F.O. 371/1192. 31326/26457/11/34.)]

I am postponing communicating to him the contents of Sir G. Barclay's telegrams Nos. 318⁽³⁾ and 319,⁽⁴⁾ as before seeing him again I should like to know what is result of communication which Sir G. Barclay was instructed to make to Stokes by your telegram No. 227⁽⁵⁾ and also whether you have any further instructions for me.

MINUTES

The Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] is not easily satisfied!

Count Benckendorff has not yet had the reply of the Russian Gov[ernmen]t, to the proposed communication to the Persian G[overnment] drawn up, I understand, in consultation with you

Unless the situation changes by Monday, Sir G. Buchanan might be told that you would prefer, if it is possible, that the rescission of the app[ointmen]t should be made by the Persian Gov[ernmen]t and not by refusing Major Stokes' application for a pension; although the latter course may become necessary, if the Persian Gov[ernmen]t are recalcitrant. In the meantime the application remains unanswered. Major Stokes is an officer in the Indian Army and as no app[ointmen]t of any kind has yet been made by the Persian G[overnment]t the Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] need have no grounds for uneasiness

L. M.

I will deal with it on Monday.

E. G.

13.8.11.

(³) [Sir G. Barclay's telegram (No. 318) of August 9, 1911, R. 8.30 P.M., reported that the Persian Government did not propose to employ Major Stokes in military operations. It was repeated to St. Petersburg (No. 428). (F.O. 371/1192. 31422/26457/11/34.)]

(⁴) [Sir G. Barclay's telegram (No. 319), D. August 9, 4.10 P.M., R. August 10, 1911, 11 A.M., reported that a communication had been made in accordance with Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 226). *v. supra*, p. 785, No. 800. A written reply was promised, but the Minister for Foreign Affairs stated that the Persian Government could not confine the appointment of Major Stokes to southern Persia as it would be a recognition of the spheres of interest under the Anglo-Russian agreement. (F.O. 371/1192. 31524/26457/11/34.)]

(⁵) [*v. supra*, p. 786, No. 801.]

No. 808.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.

F.O. 371/1192.

31541/26457/11/34.

Tel. (No. 230.)

Foreign Office, August 11, 1911, 6.15 P.M.

Your telegram No. 322.⁽¹⁾

You should tell Shuster that we appreciate his work and his single-minded motive and are sorry not to be able to do anything that he wishes. But we might ourselves have objected to appointment of a Russian officer to organize any administration on Indian frontier and as soon as we found that appointment of Stokes would be objected to by Russia we could not deprecate her objection and were bound to warn Persian Gov[ernmen]t of difficulties that would arise. For some time past there has been an understanding with Persian Gov[ernmen]t that only subjects of minor Powers should be selected. The only exception to this was the United States and to that Russia agreed influenced thereto by our opinion that the United States was beyond suspicion of any political motive in Persia. It is a pity that if a departure was to be made from this understanding the Russian Gov[ernmen]t were not sounded in advance.

I fear only way out of difficulty that has now arisen will be appointment of some subject of a minor Power.

(¹) [*v. supra*, p. 788, No. 804, note (¹).]

No. 809.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1194.
32105/32105/11/34.
(No. 101.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 11, 1911.

The Persian Minister came to see me to-day.

He made a series of complaints about the action of the Russian Government, including their objection to Major Stokes' appointment; and he stated that six Russian Naval Officers has accompanied the ex-Shah from Baku to Persian territory.

I asked him whence this latter statement came.

He said that his Government heard it from their Consuls and Vice-Consuls in Russian territory, of whom they had several.

The Minister complained that all these actions were not in accord with neutrality between the Persian Government and the ex-Shah, or with the Anglo-Russian Agreement, the principle of which was the independence of Persia.

I explained to him our action in connection with Major Stokes in the same way as I had already explained it in reply to questions in Parliament.⁽²⁾ I said that we desired to maintain the Anglo-Russian Agreement, but any questions which arose with Russia in regard to it must be discussed between Russia and ourselves: they could not be discussed with anyone else. The Persian Government should, therefore, bring their complaints directly to the notice of the Russian Government, or of the Russian Minister in Tehran.

The Minister said that this had already been done: but it had no effect.

I observed that, according to my information, there had been in the last few days more friendly conversations between M. Poklevski and the Persian Government in Tehran.

The Minister, who had a sheaf of documents, from which he read portions to me, asked whether I would like to have the facts in writing.

I said that he might send them to me in the form of a memorandum of this conversation.⁽³⁾

[I am, &c.]

F. G[REY].

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to Lord Crewe.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 787, No. 803, note ⁽⁴⁾.]

⁽³⁾ [A memorandum dated August 14, 1911, was received from Mirza Mehdi Khan on August 16. It is not reproduced, as it agrees in substance with the above despatch. (F.O. 371/1194. 32346/32105/11/34.)]

No. 810.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1192.
31880/26457/11/34.
Tel. (No. 326.)

Tehran, August 12, 1911.

D. 9.23 P.M.

R. 9.45 P.M.

Following is substance of the Persian Government's reply to my *aide-mémoire* mentioned in my telegram No. 319⁽²⁾ :—

Persian Government cannot understand the attitude of His Majesty's Government in regard to the appointment of Major Stokes.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to St. Petersburg (as No. 435). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 795, No. 807, note ⁽⁴⁾.]

Even supposing that they desired to base their objection on Anglo-Russian Agreement, the Persian Government's attitude towards which was defined in their note of 2nd November, 1907 (see Mr. Marling's despatch No. 250 of that year),⁽³⁾ not one word could be found in it to justify their contention.

On the contrary, the preamble, in that it respects in categorical terms the independence and integrity of Persia, supports the Persian point of view.

The preamble also declares that the two Governments desire the preservation of order in Persia, and the Persian Government's desire is to take the necessary steps for the collection of taxes, without which the maintenance of order would be in any country a difficult task.

The Persian Government are confident that His Majesty's Government will lend them their good offices to solve this question consistently with the dignity of Persia and with her most vital interests.

In handing me this communication, the Minister for Foreign Affairs asked my advice how to emerge from the present *impasse* without loss of face. I suggested that Major Stokes's work might be confined not perhaps expressly to the south, but to Fars, but his Excellency said that Russia would inevitably demand an equivalent in the north, so that even such an arrangement would be tantamount to recognition of spheres of influence.

His Excellency then suggested that the appointment of Stokes might be limited only to three years, with the stipulation that it was not to be a precedent. At the end of that period the Treasury gendarmerie would be entrusted to Persians or subjects of minor Powers. He said that if this did not satisfy Russia he thought that, if the Russian Government replied favourably to his recent advances (see my telegram No. 321),⁽⁴⁾ he might be able to declare that, provided the appointment of Stokes was not made the pretext for any Russian demand, he would not be sent personally on any active mission in the north as distinct from organisation work in Tehran.

I have informed the Russian Minister of the above and he does not think the proposal of the Minister for Foreign Affairs worth telegraphing to his Government.

(3) [Mr. Marling's despatch (No. 250), D. November 8, 1907, R. November 25, 1907, enclosed the text of a note from the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs dated November 2. It contained the following passage: "The Persian Government, in view of the independence of which, by the grace of God, it is in full possession, considers the full rights and freedom which it enjoys by its absolute independence, absolutely free and protected from every possible effect or influence of any kind of agreement between two or several foreign States regarding Persia, and will make every endeavour regarding its relations with friendly Powers for the strengthening of the structures of friendship and unity, in accordance with the stipulations of sacred Treaties and the principles of the open door for international commerce." (F.O. 371/373. 33641/Case 2/07/34.)]

(4) [Sir G. Barclay's telegram (No. 321), D. August 9, 4.15 P.M., R. August 10, 1911, 8. A.M., is not reproduced. It described a friendly overture to M. Poklevski-Koziell after a meeting of the Persian cabinet on August 6. (F.O. 371/1193 31457/27357/11/34.)]

No. 811.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1192.

31884/26457/11/34.

Tel. (No. 880.)

Tehran, August 13, 1911.

D. 10 P.M.

R. 9.30 P.M.

Sir G. Buchanan's telegram No. 180.⁽²⁾

I have not had your telegram No. 427⁽³⁾ to St. Petersburg.

(1) [Copies of this telegram were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

(2) [*v. supra*, pp. 794-5, No. 807.]

(3) [*v. supra*, p. 787, No. 803, note (4).]

I have not seen Major Stokes for ten days. He merely acknowledged my letter, in which I informed him of the substance of the first paragraph of your telegram No. 227.⁽⁴⁾

I do not think his loyalty to Shuster would permit of his being influenced by anything that I could tell him, unless his resignation were refused; in which case Shuster would clearly feel obliged to give him up. Shuster said at the meeting reported in my telegram No. 325⁽⁵⁾ that Stokes, in order to ease the situation for Shuster, had offered to drop out and treat the offer of appointment as though it had never been made. That Shuster will bring himself to accept this offer is, I think, unlikely, and I hesitate to press him further without instructions.

I fear there is a possibility of his resigning if he cannot get Stokes, but there would be a better chance of his staying if Stokes's appointment were stopped by the Persian Government on the pressure of Russia than if Shuster himself under our pressure accepted Stokes's offer to efface himself. In the former case he would save his face with the Medjliss.

(Sent to St. Petersburg.)

MINUTES

We must either refuse to accept Major Stokes' resignation and press Mr. Shuster to give him up or leave the Russian Gov[ernment] to stop the appointment by pressure on the Persian Gov[ernment]. Sir G. Barclay thinks the latter course would be less likely to result in the resignation of Mr. Shuster but I doubt whether it would satisfy the Russians, who might expect more active co-operation.

H. N.

Aug[ust] 14, 1911.

We must tell the Russian Gov[ernment] of the unfavourable reply of the Persian Gov[ernment] as telegraphed by Sir G. Barclay in telegram 326.⁽⁶⁾ (The last sentence can be omitted.) And await their reply. They will presumably consider it unsatisfactory to ask for our support to the representation suggested by C[oun]t Benckendorff.

L. M.

We might also remind the Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] that Maj[or] Stokes' resignation has not been accepted and will not be pending further developments.

L. M.

⁽⁴⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 786, No. 801.]

⁽⁵⁾ [Sir G. Barclay's telegram (No. 325) of August 13, 1911, D. 9.30 A.M., R. 10 A.M., described a meeting of Sir G. Barclay and M. Poklevski-Koziell with Mr. Shuster to discuss the appointment of Major Stokes to the Treasury Gendarmerie. (F.O. 371/1192. 31829/26457/11/34.)]

⁽⁶⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

No. 812.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1192.

32367/26457/11/34.

Tel. (No. 181.)

St. Petersburg, D. August 15, 1911, 8 P.M.

R. August 16, 1911, 8.30 A.M.

Your telegram No. 439⁽²⁾ (of the 14th August: Major Stokes).

I made the communication as instructed to-day to the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs.

⁽¹⁾ [Copies of this telegram were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 439) of August 14, D. 10 P.M., instructed Sir G. Buchanan to inform M. Neratov of the reply of the Persian Government, reported in Sir G. Barclay's telegram (No. 326), v. *supra*, pp. 796-7, No. 810. (F.O. 371/1192. 31834/26457/11/37.)]

His Excellency said that he had already received a report on the subject from the Russian Minister at Tehran, and he would not conceal from me the fact that he considered the matter a very unpromising one. He repeated that it was not so much what might be said or done at Tehran that was causing him preoccupation as the grave prejudice that might be caused to the working of the Anglo-Russian understanding should the engagement of Stokes be persisted in.

His appointment would inevitably cause the impression that as that understanding had not stood the test in the present instance it could not be depended on in the future. What, he asked, would have been said in England had a Russian officer accepted a post which would comprise the south of Persia in the sphere of his activity?

I reminded his Excellency of the statements which you had made in Parliament,⁽³⁾ of your promise to support any eventual demand which Russia might make respecting the gendarmerie in the north, and of the satisfaction which you had given her in warning the Persian Government that His Majesty's Government would recognise her right to take steps to safeguard her interests.

His Excellency replied that all that Russia could do would be to demand some analogous appointment for a Russian officer, such as Chief of the Staff, or to intervene by force. In the latter case an entirely new situation would be created, while in the former he did not know whether he could count upon the support of His Majesty's Government. I observed that your promised support of a Russian demand for the control of the northern gendarmerie would preclude any interference on the part of Stokes in the north.

His Excellency then proceeded to say that, should, as was not impossible, the ex-Shah regain the throne, Russian public opinion would force the Government to obtain from the Shah appointment of Chief of the Staff for a Russian officer.

I pointed out that if the ex-Shah gained the day it was probable that both Shuster and Stokes would disappear from the scene, and that consequently Russia would have no reason to ask for compensation.

His Excellency rejoined that this would make no difference. Russian Government would be told that they must profit by the fact that a Russophil Government was installed at Tehran to obtain appointments for their subjects, just as England had done in the case of Stokes when an Anglophil Government was in power. He added that the whole question was such a serious one that he could not take upon himself to decide it alone, and that he must submit it to the Council of Ministers.

Before doing so, however, he would make a final appeal to you, as since Stokes's resignation had not yet been accepted, he thought it must be possible either to recall him temporarily or to give him some appointment elsewhere.

Fact that his Excellency had just had an audience with the Emperor before seeing me gives additional weight to what he said.

(Sent to Tehran.)

⁽³⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 787, No. 803, note (*). On August 10, the Earl of Ronaldshay asked Sir Edward Grey in what respects the appointment of Major Stokes violated the Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1907.

Sir Edward Grey replied: "This question covers the question put to me by the hon[ourable] Member for East Mayo a while ago. The appointment does not violate the letter of the Agreement; but it may be contended that as regards the northern part of Persia it would be contrary to its spirit. A corresponding view might no doubt have been taken by His Majesty's Government if a Russian officer, on the expiry of his appointment as military attaché in Teheran, had been selected to organise a Gendarmerie in the part of Persia adjoining the Indian frontier." *Parl. Deb., 5th Ser.*, (House of Commons), Vol. 29, pp. 1325-6.]

No. 813.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1192.

32367/26457/11/34.

Tel. (No. 441.)

Foreign Office, August 16, 1911. 6.15 p.m.

Your telegram No. 181. (Aug[ust] 15th).⁽²⁾ Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] speaks as if we had not only acquiesced in but secured appointment of Stokes and as if it was a fait accompli. This is not so. I have on being approached by Shuster told him that appointment of a neutral was the only way out. I have warned the Persian Government against persisting in the appointment. I think it is time that Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] supported this warning at Tehran by some communication of his own to Persian Government such as Count Benckendorff has shown me.⁽³⁾ If this is done I will repeat warning to Persian Government⁽⁴⁾ and urge appointment of a neutral instead of Stokes and tell them that we cannot in view of well-founded Russian objection accept Stokes's resignation. Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] must understand that the appointment of Stokes has been made entirely without us, and that Stokes has acted quite independently. So far as I am aware Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] has not lodged any objection at Tehran and I must at present appear to Persian Government as being more Russian than the Russians in the line I have taken about it.

I think Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] and Russian opinion are more sensitive than need be about Stokes's appointment. I have never stipulated that Persian Cossacks trained at Tehran by Russian officers should not be employed in the South. But I have admitted Russian objection and done all I could hitherto to prevent the appointment, because I attach great importance to maintenance of good understanding and co-operation with Russia. It is disappointing that Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] seems to realize this so little. If I had been equally exacting from Russian Government about action of Colonel Liakhoff in past years and continued presence of Russian troops in Northern Persia good understanding between the two countries would have been over long ago. I have more than once had to defend these matters and make public opinion here patient on these points, and Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] should do as much in the case of Stokes and explain to his people that hitherto it is our action alone that has prevented appointment from being made.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Tehran (No. 238), with instructions (No. 240) to act in this sense as soon as the Russian Representative had been similarly instructed.]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

⁽³⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 785, No. 799, note ⁽⁴⁾.]

⁽⁴⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 785, No. 800; p. 795, No. 807, note ⁽¹⁾.]

No. 814.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1192.

32475/26457/11/34.

Tel. (No. 335.)

Tehran, August 17, 1911.

D. 1.55 p.m.

R. 3 p.m.

My telegram No. 326⁽²⁾ penultimate paragraph.

M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] yesterday referred to his suggestion for a settlement of Stokes difficulty. I told him I did not think that it would meet the case and added that Persian Government would do well either to confine Stokes' appointment expressly to south or to abandon it altogether.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to St. Petersburg (as No. 444). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 796-7, No. 810.]

He then gave me to understand that it would be welcome to him if Gov[ernmen]t of India recalled Stokes. This would clearly be an easy bridge for the Persian Gov[ernmen]t whereby to retreat from their position but I do not venture to predict what effect it would have on Medjliss, Shuster or Major Stokes himself.

MINUTES

Mr. Shuster would resign, most probably if Major Stokes were recalled and Major Stokes himself would very likely refuse to obey.

We must await the Russian answer to our tel[ogram] No. 441⁽³⁾ to Sir G. Buchanan.

H. N.

Aug[ust] 17, 1911.

I should be reluctant to adopt this suggestion except in the last resort, for it would draw all the fire on to us and if Mr. Shuster resigned, we should be directly blamed.

Reply in this sense and say that the M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs]' proposal (that the appointment should be limited to 3 years) is quite unacceptable to Russia and that the only solution is the selection of the subject of a minor European Power and the sooner the announcement is made the better in view of Russian susceptibilities

L. M.

(³) [v. immediately preceding document.]

No. 815.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1192.

32475/26457/11/34.

Tel. (No. 242.)

Foreign Office, August 18, 1911, 5.15 P.M.

Proposal of Persian M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] is unacceptable to Russian Gov[ernmen]t.

Russian M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] should renew his protest to Persian Gov[ernmen]t. You will then repeat warning given to Persian Gov[ernmen]t by you already and urge appointment of some neutral and say that we cannot accept Stokes's resignation in view of well founded Russian objections to his appointment. Stokes clearly cannot take up appointment till his resignation has been accepted but to recall him summarily after he has offered resignation is a harsh step to take and I am reluctant to ask Gov[ernmen]t of India to take it.

(1) [This telegram was repeated to St. Petersburg (No. 450).]

No. 816.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1192.

32795/26457/11/34.

Tel. (No. 185.)

St. Petersburg, August 19, 1911.

D. 8.2 P.M.

R. 9.15 P.M.

My telegram No. 182.⁽²⁾

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, whom I saw this afternoon, desired me to convey to you his warmest thanks for the instructions sent to Sir G. Barclay in

(1) [Copies of this telegram were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

(2) [Sir G. Buchanan's telegram (No. 182) of August 17, 1911, D 8.5 P.M., R. 9 P.M., referred to his telegram (No. 175) of August 4 (v. *supra*, pp. 783-4, No. 798) and said that the Russian Government had already lodged a protest at Tehran. (F.O. 371/1192. 32494/26457/11/34A.)]

your telegram No. 242,⁽³⁾ more especially for your declaration that His Majesty's Government cannot accept Stokes's resignation.

I reminded him of the attitude which you had always adopted in Parliament when Russian action in Persia had been unfavourably commented on in the past, and expressed hope that his Excellency would also use his influence to tranquillise Russian public opinion when our policy was subjected to unreasonable criticisms. His Excellency replied that we might count on his doing so, as he attached greatest importance to the closest co-operation between the two Governments, particularly at the present moment, when affairs in Persia were in such a critical state.

Russian Minister at Tehran has been instructed to make a communication as you suggested.

(Sent to Tehran.)

(³) [v. immediately preceding document]

No. 817.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.(¹)

F.O. 371/1192.
33048/26457/11/34.
Tel. (No. 348.)

Tehran, August 21, 1911.

D. 9 P.M.

R. 7 P.M.

Schuster visited the Russian Minister yesterday and again pressed him hard regarding appointment of Stokes.

He said he was willing to undertake that Stokes should not be employed in the north except for organisation work in Tehran, that he should remain in the capital for only six months, and should be then sent to Shiraz. He held out hopes of arranging for a counterbalancing appointment of a Russian officer in the north. He promised, moreover, to exclude from certain negotiations for a loan which he had opened with Colonel Beddoes the conversion of Russian Bank's loan, and to negotiate this conversion with the Russian Government.

Russian Minister, while holding out no hope that his Government would change their attitude, promised to submit to them these proposals, and he has since told me that he is reporting by no means unsympathetically.

After his conversation with Russian Minister Schuster induced "Times" correspondent to refrain from sending a report of an interview which he had given him which would have embittered matters.

He also told Russian Minister and me that he would for the present withhold public statement which he was preparing. I gather this statement would be on the lines indicated in my telegram No. 322,⁽²⁾ penultimate paragraph.

(¹) [This telegram was sent to St. Petersburg (as No. 457). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

(²) [v. *supra*, pp. 788-9, No. 804, and *note* (¹). The penultimate paragraph of the telegram is identical in wording with that of the enclosure to the despatch.]

No. 818.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1192.
 33764/26457/11/34.
 (No. 236.)

St. Petersburg, D. August 22, 1911.

R. August 28, 1911.

Sir,

In continuation of my despatch No. 228 of the 9th of this month,⁽²⁾ I have the honour to report that in a conversation which I had with the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs on the 10th instant, I informed His Excellency of the statement which you had made in the House of Commons two days previously,⁽³⁾ and explained that, pending the reply of the Persian Government to Sir George Barclay's last communication, the question of Major Stokes' appointment would remain in abeyance. I added that should the Persian Government contrary to your expectation, decline to give way, His Majesty's Government would support Russia were she to demand that the Gendarmerie force in North Persia should be placed under the command of a Russian officer or of a subject of a Minor Power, whom Russia might designate. As Monsieur Nératoff observed that I had omitted to say what His Majesty's Government would do, should Major Stokes's appointment not be confined to the south, I pointed out that, if Russia obtained the control of the Northern Gendarmerie, it naturally followed that Major Stokes would be precluded from trespassing in the Russian zone.

On my calling on Monsieur Nératoff two days later to communicate the reply which had just been received from the Persian Government, I found His Excellency in an unusually perturbed state of mind. He had already received a report on the subject from Monsieur Poklewsky so that he had had time to reflect on the situation while, as he had but just returned from an audience with the Emperor at Peterhof, he was, it is to be presumed, fully acquainted with His Majesty's personal views. After emphasizing the serious character of the incident which had so unfortunately arisen, His Excellency proceeded to dwell on the prejudicial manner in which Major Stokes' appointment would react on the effective working of the Anglo-Russian Understanding. It would, he said, inevitably create the impression that, as that Understanding had failed to stand the test in the present instance, its stability could not be depended on and that it would fail to answer the calls that might be made on it in the future. What, he asked, would have been said in England had our respective positions been reversed and had it been a Russian officer who had accepted a post in the Persian Service which conferred on him the right to organize and control a Gendarmerie force in South Persia?

I replied that His Excellency seemed to have forgotten the various statements which you had made in Parliament,⁽⁴⁾ in one of which you had touched on this very point as well as the promise which you had given to support Russia in the matter of the Northern Gendarmerie and the serious warning which you had addressed to the Persian Government. Major Stokes's resignation moreover had not yet been accepted nor would it be accepted pending further developments. I did not therefore, see what more you could do, nor did I believe that, after all that you had said and done, the Anglo-Russian Understanding could in any way be impaired.

(1) [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe. A copy was sent to the Director of Military Operations.]

(2) [*v. supra*, pp. 789-93, No. 805.]

(3) [*cp. supra*, p. 787, No. 803, note (4).]

(4) [*cp. supra*, p. 787, No. 803, note (4); p. 799, No. 812, note (3).]

Monsieur Nératoff, however, adhered to his views which he had already expressed, and said that Russia could do nothing to obtain satisfaction. She might, it was true, intervene by force, but to do so would be to create an entirely new situation or she might present a demand for an appointment of an analogous nature to that of Major Stokes—such as Chief of the Staff—but he did not know whether His Majesty's Government would support such a demand. If, however, as was by no means impossible, the ex-Shah remounted the throne, public opinion would, after Major Stokes' appointment, insist on the Russian Government presenting it.

I pointed out that were Mohamed Ali once more installed at Tehran, both Mr. Shuster and Major Stokes would in all probability disappear from the scene and, as in that case the latter would not command the Gendarmerie, Russia would have no reason to ask for a counterbalancing appointment. Monsieur Nératoff, however, declared that this would make no difference. It would, he maintained, be contended here that Major Stokes had obtained his appointment owing to the fact that, when an Anglophil Government was in power at Tehran, England seized the occasion to push her interests, and that Russia must likewise profit by the return of a sovereign, who was well disposed towards her, to get a Russian officer appointed Chief of the Staff.

His Excellency concluded by saying that the question raised by Major Stokes' appointment was such a serious one that he could not assume the responsibility of dealing with it by himself and that he would have to submit it to the Council of Ministers. Before doing so, however, he would make a final appeal to you as, now that I had told him that Major Stokes' resignation had not yet been accepted, he thought that it must be possible for His Majesty's Government either to recall him temporarily to London or to give him some appointment in India. He earnestly hoped that you would consider this, as it would be deplorable were the Anglo-Russian Understanding to be impaired for the sake of gratifying the "amour-propre" of this officer.

As Monsieur Nératoff was too busy to receive me when I asked for an interview after the receipt of your telegram No. 441 of the 16th instant,⁽⁵⁾ I embodied the main points of that telegram in a private letter of which I have the honour to enclose a copy. In a conversation which I had with him two days later I supplemented what I had said in it by once more impressing on him the fact that His Majesty's Government had had nothing whatever to do with Major Stokes' appointment and by reminding him of the attitude which you had consistently adopted when unfavourable comments had been made in Parliament respecting the proceedings of Colonel Liakhoff and the retention of the Russian garrison in Persia. I trusted, I said, that His Excellency would on his part exercise the same moderating influence on Russian public opinion, whenever, as had recently been the case, the conduct of His Majesty's Government was subjected to unreasonable criticisms.

His Excellency replied that we might count upon his doing so, as there was nothing that he desired more than that the two Governments should always work together more especially at a moment like the present when affairs in Persia were in such a critical state. He had already instructed Monsieur Poklewsky to address a communication to the Persian Government in the terms of the Note which had been submitted to you by Count Benckendorff,⁽⁶⁾ and to associate himself with Sir George Barclay in urging that Government to entrust the organisation of the Revenue Gendarmerie to one of the Swedish officers. He would only ask me to convey to you his warmest thanks for having instructed Sir George Barclay to state that His Majesty's Government cannot accept Major Stokes' resignation.

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

⁽⁵⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 800, No. 813.]

⁽⁶⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 785, No. 799, and note ⁽⁴⁾.]

Enclosure in No. 818.

Sir G. Buchanan to M. Neratov.

Mon cher Mousieur Nératow,

Saint-Pétersbourg, le 4 (17) août, 1911.

Je viens de recevoir un long télégramme du Foreign Office, dont je vous donnerai lecture samedi. Mais, en attendant, je tiens à vous faire savoir que Sir Edward Grey trouve que le Gouvernement Impérial, ainsi que l'opinion publique en Russie, exagère un peu la portée de l'incident Stokes, et paraît regarder la nomination de cet officier comme un fait accompli. Ça n'est pas du tout le cas; et en outre le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté n'a rien fait pour justifier l'impression qu'il a voulu assurer la nomination du Major Stokes au poste de Chef de la Gendarmerie fiscale ou qu'il a consenti à cette nomination. Tout au contraire le Ministre de Sa Majesté à Téhéran a été chargé, à plusieurs reprises, de faire des représentations au Gouvernement Persan à ce sujet et de l'avertir que si ce dernier persistait à confier à Stokes la tâche d'organiser une gendarmerie nationale pour toute la Perse le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté reconnaîtrait le droit de la Russie de pourvoir aux mesures qu'elle jugera nécessaires pour sauvegarder ses intérêts.

Sir Edward estime que la Russie ne doit plus tarder à adresser au Gouvernement Persan une communication, conçue dans le sens de la Note dont le Comte Benckendorff lui a tout récemment soumis le texte, car à défaut d'une telle protestation de la part de la Russie le Gouvernement Persan sera porté à croire que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté soit plus royaliste que le roi en ce qui concerne la défense des intérêts russes en Perse. Pour le cas où le Gouvernement Impérial se décide à faire une telle démarche, Sir Edward Grey sera disposé à renouveler l'avertissement, qu'il a déjà adressé au Gouvernement Persan; de lui donner à entendre que la meilleure solution serait de charger un ressortissant d'une Puissance secondaire de l'organisation de la Gendarmerie à la place de Stokes; et d'ajouter que, si le Gouvernement Persan se montre toujours intransigeant à ce sujet, le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté, vu les objections bien fondées de la Russie, refusera d'accepter la démission de Stokes.

Je vous exposerai plus longuement la manière de voir de Sir Edward Grey samedi, mais je n'ai pas voulu attendre jusqu'à ce jour pour vous faire part d'une communication qui montrera, j'espère, que mon Gouvernement dans son désir de collaborer loyalement avec la Russie en toute question qui touche aux intérêts des deux pays, est disposé à faire tout son possible pour aller au-devant des désirs du Gouvernement Impérial dans l'affaire dont il s'agit à présent.

Votre sincèrement dévoué,

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

No. 819.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1192.

35807/26457/11/94.

Tel. (No. 380.)

Tehran, September 7, 1911.

D. 12.5 P.M.

R. 1.45 P.M.

My tel[egram] No. 348.⁽²⁾

Shuster finds it impossible to give an express undertaking in the sense of his proposals as it would be regarded by Nationalists as a recognition of the spheres of interest.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to St. Petersburg (as No. 496). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 802, No. 817.]

At a meeting yesterday at Russian Legation he proposed that a new contract should be prepared engaging Major Stokes for nine months or if that is impossible for six months to assist Treasurer-General in Tehran in organisation of Treasury gendarmerie. Question of any further employment of Major Stokes after expiration of this contract being left for subsequent consideration; he might either rejoin Indian army or a new contract might be concluded in accordance with wishes of two Gov[ernmen]ts.

Shuster begs Russian Gov[ernmen]t as a favour to consent to this arrangement and he hopes that H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] will consent to second Major Stokes for period named. I ventured to tell Shuster that I thought that if Russia consented to proposed arrangement there would be no difficulty in seconding Major Stokes. Both Russian Minister and I agree that if Major Stokes is to get this appointment it would be better that he should retain his position in Indian Army.

No. 820.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1192.

35307/26457/11/34.

Tel. (No. 256.)

Foreign Office, September 8, 1911, 2.40 p.m.

I have no doubt seconding of Stokes will be arranged if Russians agree to proposed arrangements. I desire to facilitate in interest of Shuster's work whatever the Russians will agree to but if I urge proposal at St. Petersburg it may appear as if we had some reason of our own for getting Stokes appointed.

Reference is to your tel[egram] No. 380 of Sept[ember] 7.⁽²⁾

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to St. Petersburg (No. 502).]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

No. 821.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1192.

36048/26457/11/34A.

Tel. (No. 206.)

St. Petersburg, September 13, 1911.

D. 8.56 p.m.

R. 11 p.m.

Sir G. Barclay's telegram No. 380⁽²⁾ and your telegram No. 256⁽³⁾ to him.

I referred in the course of conversation with Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs this afternoon to the negotiations which had been proceeding between Shuster and the Russian Minister respecting the organisation of gendarmerie force, and asked what he thought of them.

His Excellency replied that the question was a very difficult one, and that he was giving it his serious attention. He was most anxious to find a solution that would give satisfaction to Shuster and which would at the same time be acceptable here. He feared that engagement of Major Stokes, even for a few months, would make a very bad impression here, as the gendarmerie to be organised was not to be used solely for fiscal purposes, but was to be an armed force for the maintenance of order throughout the country.

⁽¹⁾ [Copies of this telegram were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 805-6, No. 819.]

⁽³⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

I observed that the organisation of such a force seemed to be urgently needed, but that His Majesty's Government were taking no part in the negotiations, as they would not support an arrangement to which Russia might take exception. Shuster, I added, seemed still to believe that Major Stokes was the only man capable of doing the organising work.

His Excellency said he did not share this view, and that he thought that someone else might be found at Tehran; amongst others he mentioned an Austrian. I asked whether he would like to see command of such a force given to an Austrian. He replied that Austrian in question was already in the Persian service.

I fear that, even if Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs were to consent to the temporary employment of Major Stokes, we should again be exposed to attacks in the Russian press. The "Novoe Vremya" quite recently published a telegram from Tehran denouncing the idea of Major Stokes's engagement, and emphasising his anti-Russian sentiments.

(Sent to Tehran.)

MINUTE.

We are not called on to interfere at this stage.

H. N.
Sept[ember] 14, 1911.
A. N.
E. G.

No. 822.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1199.

41606/41606/11/34.

(No. 190.) Confidential.

Sir,

Gulahek, D. October 4, 1911.

R. October 23, 1911.

The Russian Minister has been trying for many months to obtain for Nobel and Company permission to lay a pipe-line from Enzeli to Resht with a view to the easier handling of Russian petroleum in Persia and I am happy to say that the present Cabinet has at last succeeded in obtaining the sanction of the Mejliss for this concession.

I mention this matter as of interest as showing that the present Cabinet is really trying to give effect to the desideratum, expressed in the programme enclosed in my Despatch No. 145,⁽²⁾ of the establishment of better relations with Russia, and I may mention as a further indication of the satisfactory disposition of the present Cabinet the fact that since the defeat of Salar ed Dowleh the Government have given such comforting assurances to the many reactionaries who have for some time been enjoying the shelter of Zerguendeh, the Russian Legation village, that these have now returned to Tehran thus relieving the Russian Minister of considerable embarrassment.

I should also mention as evidence that the Russian Minister is responsive to these little marks of good-will that he has recently used the discretion given him by his Government as to whether to allow or to forbid the employment of the Russian officers of the Cossack Brigade on active service, to accede to the request of the Persian Government that some of the Russian officers might be dispatched with a force of Persian Cossacks to deal with the outlaw Naib Hussein who, as reported

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King; to the Prime Minister; to Lord Crewe.]

⁽²⁾ [Sir G. Barclay's despatch (No. 145), D. August 9, R. August 28, 1911, stated that the Persian Government were anxious to do everything possible with a view to establishing a better understanding with Russia. (F.O. 371/1193. 33753/27357/11/34.) *cp. supra*, p. 797, No. 810, and *note* (1).]

in my telegram No. 432 of the 25th ultimo,⁽³⁾ has occupied Kashan and two of the Russian officers left with a force of some 300 men for Kashan yesterday.

On the whole, and notwithstanding abundant complaints from the Persian Government regarding the high-handed action of some of the Russian Consuls in the interest of Mohammad Ali, the relations of the present Cabinet with the Russian Minister are satisfactory and it is therefore to be hoped that it will be able to tide over the three weeks which still remain before the Mejliss terminates. Unfortunately this is by no means certain for although it is in appearance democrat in its composition it is distrusted by the ultra-Nationalists who are, I am told, anxious to upset it and to place in power a more advanced Ministry before the restraining influence of the Mejliss is temporarily removed. Moreover the success of the Cabinet in dealing with the insurrection has in one respect rather weakened than strengthened its position, for the all important part played by the Bakhtiari in the struggle has earned for them a good deal of envy and distrust, and intrigues are said to be more than usually active against the Bakhtiari Prime Minister, Samsam es Sultaneh. A further element of weakness lies in the Cabinet's aloofness from Mr. Shuster who enjoys the entire confidence of the ultra-Nationalists. There is indeed a disposition on the part of both Mr. Shuster and the Cabinet to work separately. You will have noticed that in the matter of the Seligman loan negotiations the Cabinet has not figured at all and though many weeks ago Mr. Shuster asked the Minister for Foreign Affairs to apply to the two Legations for their good offices in the matter we have received no written communication in regard to it from Vossouk ed Dowleh and whenever the latter has alluded verbally to the loan it has always been in such sense as to imply a disclaimer of responsibility for it. It is perhaps natural that a Persian Cabinet should look askance at one who keeps the purse-strings as tight as Mr. Shuster, but, owing to his influence with the ultra-Nationalist section of the Mejliss, his backing would be so important an asset that somewhat closer co-operation with him would seem to be politic.

In connection with Mr. Shuster's position I ought to mention that my Russian Colleague sees indications that his influence is waning with the moderate section of the Mejliss. I am not sure how far this is true. Certainly the decision of the Mejliss reported in my telegram No. 465 of to-day⁽⁴⁾ to engage Mr. New of the Indo-European Telegraph Department at the Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs which was taken under pressure from Mr. Shuster and in the face of active lobbying by the corrupt Vice-Minister of Posts and Telegraphs Assadullah Khan, points to the contrary. In any case his influence with the ultra-Nationalists is as strong as ever and, as I have often said, this party has in large measure the monopoly of ability and energy in the Mejliss. It is a disagreeable feature of the situation that any opposition to Mr. Shuster is likely to find encouragement from some of the foreign Representatives in Tehran, whose hostility he has managed to incur. In most cases this is, I believe, due to personal pique at Mr. Shuster's independent attitude towards them, but in the case of the French Minister the feeling probably lies deeper and is doubtless largely due to his annoyance at Mr. Shuster's having replaced Mr. Bizot and having met with very different success with the Mejliss from that which attended M. Bizot's mission. I should imagine also from a conversation I have had with Monsieur Dumorguy the French Assistant at the Ministry of the Interior, that both he and Monsieur Perny, the French Assistant at the Ministry of Justice, do their utmost to foster Monsieur Lecomte's dislike of Mr. Shuster. Monsieur Dumorguy is evidently intensely jealous of him and spoke of him to me in the most disparaging terms. It was quite evident that he intended to do his best to thwart Mr. Shuster's

(3) [Sir G. Barclay's telegram (No. 432) of September 25, 1911, D. 3.30 P.M., R. 2 P.M., is not reproduced, as the contents are sufficiently indicated above. (F.O. 371/1193. 37616/27357/11/34.)]

(4) [Sir G. Barclay's telegram (No. 465) of October 4, 1911, D. 2.30 P.M., R. 3.25 P.M., is not reproduced, as the contents are sufficiently indicated above. (F.O. 371/1194. 38910/29463/11/34.)]

plan of merging with his own gendarmerie the force which is to be organised by the Swedish officers. The dislike felt by the French element for Mr. Shuster would not concern me greatly were it not that knowing Mr. Lecomte as I do, I feel pretty sure that he does his best to prejudice my Russian Colleague against him. For this Mr. Lecomte has a handle in the close relations of Mr. Shuster with the ultra-nationalists, though to my mind Mr. Shuster's connection with this party has its advantages as it gives him a better chance to influence them on the side of reason.

I have, &c.

G. BARCLAY.

No. 823.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1195.
89878/39878/11/34A.
Tel. (No. 239.)

St. Petersburg, October 10, 1911.

D. 3.18 P.M.

R. 6 P.M.

I had a conversation yesterday with the President of the Council, who showed a keen interest in foreign affairs.

He said Anglo-Russian *entente* had been working unsatisfactorily in Persia. On my asking him to specify, he referred to the Stokes question. I said His Majesty's Government had done everything in that matter that the Russian Government could ask. He recognised that they had now done so, but complained that there had been much delay. I explained that there were the gravest difficulties about declining to accept Major Stokes's resignation, and that His Majesty's Government had taken a very strong course in order to meet wishes of Russian Government.

President of the Council then referred to Turkish designs on Persian territory. He seemed to attach importance to rumour that Turkey would seek compensation for Tripoli in that quarter. He stated that Caucasian authorities constantly reported that Turkey was steadily strengthening herself so as to endanger Russian strategical position, and he said that it would be absolutely necessary for Russia to take action to prevent such a result. I of course assured him that His Majesty's Government would continue to co-operate with Russian Government in this question.

President of the Council goes to Crimea on Saturday for an audience of the Emperor.

MINUTES.

The President of the Council's interest in Foreign Affairs apparently exceeds his knowledge, or he w[oul]d have remembered that the Russian Gov[ernmen]t expressed to us, both here and in St. Petersburg, their warm thanks for our action in the Stokes affair. With regard to par[agraph] 2 the latest phase of the frontier question seems to offer better prospect of solution than has been in view for long past.

The complaint is unfounded and ungrateful. If he means what he says he must have something else in his mind.

Qy. Tel[egraph] to [St.] Petersburg,⁽²⁾ saying H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] have heard with much surprise of President of Council's complaint. They cannot admit that they have done less than their utmost to meet Russia over the Stokes affair, for their action in which Russian Gov[ernmen]t has thanked them, nor that they have failed to co-operate loyally with Russia in the frontier question, which is primarily one of Russian concern. If President of Council has any other grievance H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] would welcome a frank explanation.

R. G. V.

Oct[ober] 11.

⁽¹⁾ [Copies of this telegram were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately succeeding document.]

There has been some delay over the Stokes affair owing to the attempt at a compromise which has now failed. It is rather a sweeping statement that the entente has been working unsatisfactorily and I think we are entitled to know a little more of what M. Kokovtsoff's complaint really is.

R. P. M.

In the initial stage of the Stokes affair, the dilatoriness of the Russian Gov[ernment] in not answering our enquiry as to how they viewed the app[ointmen]t was the cause of the matter assuming the proportions which it did. M. Kokovtsoff is very ill-informed evidently and I think it would be as well to send him a message.

L. M.

E. G.

No. 824.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. O'Beirne.

F.O. 371/1195.

39878/39878/11/34A.

Tel. (No. 607.)

Foreign Office, October 12, 1911, 1.45 p.m.

Your tel[egram] No. 239 (of Oct[ober] 10).⁽¹⁾ You should inform President of the Council before his departure for the Crimea that I much regret that he should consider that the Anglo-Russian entente has not been working satisfactorily in Persia. In respect to the Stokes question H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] in order to meet the wishes of the Russian Gov[ernment] took strong and exceptional action which blocked the app[ointmen]t of that officer altho[ugh] in itself the app[ointmen]t would doubtless have facilitated the task of organizing a force to deal with disturbances on roads. The Russian Gov[ernment] moreover expressed their thanks for the action of H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment]. H[is] E[xc]ellency should be reminded that the inability from want of funds and other causes of the Persian Gov[ernment] to maintain order and security on the roads is now practically stopping British trade altogether while Russian commerce is not being injured to anything like the same extent. In regard to the Turco-Persian frontier H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] have always shown every possible desire to co-operate with the Russian Gov[ernment] and have acted in closest harmony with them. Throughout all the Persian difficulties of whatever nature H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] have acted in co-operation with Russia even when their action has been exposed to criticism in Parl[iamen]t and outside. Our attitude and conduct since the signature of the Agreement have been in perfect loyalty to its letter and spirit, and on more than one occasion both Gov[ernment]s have had reason to congratulate themselves that the Convention in respect to Persia has been so faithfully observed on both sides.

(¹) [v. immediately preceding document.]

No. 825.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1195.

40482/39878/11/34.

(No. 263.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 12, 1911.

I told Count Benckendorff to-day what M. Kokovtsoff had said to Mr. O'Beirne about the Entente in Persia and Major Stokes.⁽²⁾

(¹) [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

(²) [v. *supra*, p. 809, No. 823.]

I also told him what I had instructed Mr. O'Beirne to say,⁽³⁾ and I pointed out to Count Benckendorff that, as the organisation of the Gendarmerie would remedy the injury to British trade in Persia, our action in supporting the Russian objection to the employment of Major Stokes ought to be recognised as extremely loyal to the Entente. I recognised the natural objection of Russia to the employment of a British Officer to command Gendarmerie in the north of Persia, and I understood that Major Stokes had expressed strong anti-Russian views. But none the less, in view of the fact that Russian trade was not suffering in the same degree as British trade and might, by the blocking of the Southern trade routes, positively be gaining what we were losing, it was not fair for M. Kokovtsoff to complain of the working of the Entente from the Russian point of view.

Count Benckendorff admitted the force of all this, but told me he gathered from what he heard that M. Kokovtsoff felt that the "tout ensemble" in northern Persia was becoming increasingly British. Mr. Shuster seemed to select British people, and an Englishman had been appointed to control the Posts and Telegraphs. The general tendency seemed to be towards an increase of British influence in northern Persia.

[I am, &c.]
E. G[REY].

(3) [v. immediately preceding document.]

No. 826.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1195.
40457/39878/11/34.
Tel. (No. 246.)

St. Petersburg, October 14, 1911.
D. 11.10 A.M.
R. 1 P.M.

Your telegram No. 607.⁽²⁾

I gave your message last night to the President of the Council. He appeared genuinely impressed, and begged me to thank you heartily for the courtesy you had shown him, in giving him these explanations and to assure you that his one wish was to work in complete understanding with H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment]. The effective working of the entente was more important than ever previously.

As regards the Turco-Persian frontier, His Excellency spoke again strongly in the sense reported in my telegram No. 239.⁽³⁾ I asked whether there were any definite steps in which Russia desired us to co-operate. His Excellency then said that he would frankly confess that the Viceroy of the Caucasus had proposed sending troops to Khoi. Russian Government had decided not to send troops, but they had despatched an energetic consular officer with an escort of about 100 men which would enable him to take a firm line. I said that I could not believe that the Turks contemplated any action at the present juncture which would provoke hostilities with Russia; but from this His Excellency dissented. He asked whether H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] would raise any objection to the present step. I said that I was personally sure that they would not.

Confidential. H[is] E[xc]cellency spoke as if Russian Gov[ernment]t had seriously contemplated military occupation and they evidently mean energetic action.

(1) [Copies of this telegram were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

(2) [v. *supra*, p. 810, No. 824.]

(3) [v. *supra*, p. 809, No. 823.]

No. 827.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1195.
40504/40504/11/34.
Tel. (No. 496.)

Tehran, October 15, 1911.

D. 4.35 P.M.
R. 6 P.M.

My telegram No. 494.⁽²⁾

Most Confidential.

I gather that the Russian Minister is advising his Government to propose to Persian Government engagement of Russian instructors for the army and to consult His Majesty's Government as to any reserves they may wish to make.

Please do not use this information at St. Petersburg.

MINUTES.

It is perhaps fortunate that the Russians made so much trouble about Stokes. If this proposal matures we may legitimately use some of their own arguments upon them. In view of this prospective proposal, which w[oul]d not be satisfactory to us, it w[oul]d perhaps be politic to intimate that we sh[oul]d have no objection to the Swedes, before the Russians get their proposal in (see 40502⁽²⁾).

R. G. V.
Oct[ober] 16.

As we have consulted the Russian Gov[ernmen]t about the Swedes I fear we can hardly announce our views to the Persian Gov[ernmen]t till we have heard from Russia.

We might however tell the Russian Gov[ernmen]t that we have no objection to the Swedes with ref[erence] to Mr. O'Beirne's tel[egram] 243⁽³⁾ and express hope that they will agree.

R. V. M.

I would wait till the Russian G[overnmen]t consults us.

L. M.

Certainly wait for the Russian Gov[ernmen]t.

A. N.
E. G.

⁽¹⁾ [Copies of this telegram were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [Sir G. Barclay's telegram (No. 494) of October 15, 1911, D. 10 A.M., R. 3 P.M., stated that the appointment of two Swedish officers for the organisation of the Persian army had been sanctioned by the Medjliss. (F.O. 371/1195. 40502/37059/11/34.)]

⁽³⁾ [Mr O'Beirne's telegram (No. 243) of October 12, 1911, D. 8.14 P.M., R. 9 P.M., stated that the Russian Government were waiting for views of Russian Minister at Tehran, and that the Swedish Government would not give their consent without consulting His Majesty's Government. (F.O. 371/1195. 40151/37059/11/34A.)]

IV.—THE DISMISSAL OF MR. SHUSTER.

No. 828.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 371/1199.
41203/41203/11/34A.
Tel. (No. 252.) Confidential.

St. Petersburg, October 19, 1911.

D. 8 P.M.
R. 11 P.M.

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs made a very serious communication to me to-day regarding Persia. He stated that he had received a most pessimistic telegram from the Russian Minister at Tehran, and that he did not think that the Russian Government would be able to refrain much longer from taking "measures of extreme vigour"—in fact, from occupying the northern provinces. Reasons he advanced were the increasing disorders, with attacks on Russian convoys, &c., in the Ardebil region; prospect of increasing chaos in Persian affairs generally; and the attempts of Shuster to establish a control over the administration, which was

entirely incompatible with Russia's interests. The latter was evidently the governing consideration with his Excellency, and he referred to Shuster's alleged intention to obtain full power from the Medjliss with regard to railways and loans.

I said that he knew His Majesty's Government's views with regard to occupation. If Russia occupied the north of Persia it would be so difficult for you to defend our further co-operation with her in that country that I foresaw the gravest dangers to our *entente*. I was therefore convinced that His Majesty's Government would do everything that lay in their power in order to remove the reasons which, in Russia's view, necessitated occupation. I reminded him that so far the Russian Government had merely vetoed the various schemes put forward for establishing a stable Government in Persia. What was it that they wished done?

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs replied that the first thing necessary was that Shuster should understand that he must take into account the interests of the two Powers and proceed in co-operation with them. The projected reforms in Persia must also be proceeded with gradually and in consonance with Russia's interests, and generally it must be understood that Russia's interests were to be consulted.

My impression is that though the Russian Government are very near to taking action they may yet be stayed if they obtain satisfaction in regard to Shuster.

(Sent to Tehran.)

MINUTES

This is grave, and the Russian reasons for contemplating such a step seem insufficient. As to No. 1 the Russians have not put up with half so much in the North as we have in the South. As to No. 2, if Shuster can finance a proper reorganisation of gendarmerie or the army, such as is now contemplated, there is surely hope of better, and not worse things. No. 3 is probably the Russian objection to the Seligman loan (and the powers thereby conferred on Shuster and Seligman's representative) put in other words.⁽¹⁾ But if Russia vetoes loans and also complains of disorders, we are in a vicious circle. As to last sentence of para[graph] 1 satisfaction c[oul]d probably be given to Russia by a tactful warning to Shuster.

Qy. Tel[egram] to Mr. O'Beirne in sense of above considerations adding that H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] earnestly hope Russia will not proceed to such extreme and embarrassing measures, and, in a separate tel[egram], instruct Mr. O'Beirne to ask Russian Gov[ernmen]t for a frank statement of their objections in detail to Seligman loan project, which is probably at the bottom of the present trouble.

W[oul]d it be possible for Sir G. Barclay to talk to Shuster in a friendly and unofficial manner so as to let him see which way the wind is blowing. The difficulties of the present situation are complicated by Shuster's personal character.

R. G. V.

Oct[ober] 20.

In a later tel[egram] the Regent complains of Shuster. He has completely failed to appreciate that Persia is a country protected by Russia and Britain and it is clear that the only way to preserve the *Entente* between us and Russia which is of paramount importance is to get rid of Shuster.

L. M.

This question opens a wide vista and will have to be carefully examined. In order to stop the Russian Gov[ernmen]t taking any immediate action I sent the accompanying private tel[egram] from myself to Mr. O'Beirne.⁽²⁾

A. N.

This is very tiresome and very serious. Ask Count Benckendorff to come to see me on Monday.⁽³⁾

E. G.

21.10.11.

⁽¹⁾ [The numbering in this paragraph appears to refer to different sentences in paragraph 1 of the above telegram, "No. 1" corresponding to the second sentence, "No. 2" to the third, and "No. 3" to the fourth.]

⁽²⁾ [On October 20, 1911, Sir A. Nicolson telegraphed to Mr. O'Beirne stating that he doubted "if a reply will be able to be sent by or before Tuesday or Wednesday," and telling him to "take means to prevent Russian Gov[ernmen]t from carrying into effect any of the measures indicated until you hear from us." (F.O. 371/1199. 41203/41203/11/34A.)]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. infra*, pp. 815-6, No. 831.]

No. 829.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1199.

41317/41203/11/34.

Tel. (No. 253.)

*St. Petersburg, October 20, 1911.*Persia. My telegram No. 252 of the 19th October.⁽²⁾

In our conversation yesterday M. Nératof expressed the opinion that in the event of the extreme party gaining the upper hand at Tehran there would no longer be any Government there with which we could deal. From this remark it is clear that the risk of Russian intervention would be greatly increased by the resignation of the Regent.

Another remark of M. Nératof's was to the effect that, in the present "uncertain situation," Russia could not favour the scheme for appointing Swedish officers to reorganise the Persian army. In reply to my complaint that every scheme of reform put forward in Persia had been met by Russian opposition, M. Nératof said that he regretted the obstructive rôle which Russia had been obliged to play, but that circumstances were alone to blame for her attitude.

⁽¹⁾ [The text given above is taken from the *Confidential Print*, as the original decypher cannot be traced.]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

No. 830.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1199.

41522/41203/11/34.

Tel. (No. 513.)

Tehran, October 22, 1911.

D. 1.45 P.M.

R. 3.10 P.M.

St. Petersburg telegrams No. 252⁽²⁾ and 253.⁽³⁾

I do not know that there has been any special aggravation of situation in the north. Russian Minister's pessimistic telegram referred to by Russian Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs is apparently the telegram in which he reported Regent's message to me (see my telegram No. 498).⁽⁴⁾ Russian Minister, in commenting on this message, said that intrigues are thus beginning again and the situation is becoming complicated.

Main feature of the situation in Tehran is the support afforded each other by Shuster and the extremists. Tension between Shuster and the Cabinet is very great. An idea of inducing the Medjliss to curtail Shuster's powers, which averted impending Ministerial crisis, seems for the moment to have been abandoned, as the Medjliss was found to be averse to it for fear of Shuster's resignation.

Prime Minister spoke to me yesterday most bitterly of Shuster. Cabinet intensely resent his tight hold of the purse-strings, and they are not blind to the danger involved in his defiant attitude towards Great Britain and Russia.

There is no reason to suppose that the Persian Government are responsible for

⁽¹⁾ [Copies of this telegram were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 812-3, No. 828.]

⁽³⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

⁽⁴⁾ [Sir G. Barclay's telegram (No. 498) of October 17, 1911, D. 11.30 A.M., R. 12.30 P.M., reported that the Regent's message was to the effect that the extremists had brought about a Cabinet crisis, and that he himself proposed to resign the Regency. (F.O. 371/1199. 40925/40925/11/34.)]

Shuster's recent publications in British press, which, I understand, he is following up with a more detailed indictment of the two Powers.⁽⁵⁾

Other than these publications, there has been no tangible act on the part of Shuster which would warrant such action as that foreshadowed in last sentence of St. Petersburg telegram No. 252,⁽⁶⁾ though of course general drift of his policy must be obnoxious to Russia.

(Sent to St. Petersburg.)

MINUTES

If Shuster has to be tackled and to listen patiently to a little friendly but plain speaking—which might cause him to resign in a huff—it w[oul]d be better if it could be done *after* the approaching dissolution of the Mejliss

R. G. V.
Oct[ober] 23.

The Mejliss is to be dissolved about the middle of next month.

R. P. M.

It would perhaps be better to wait a little and see if the Persian G[overnmen]t get rid of him.

We might consult Sir G. Barclay about this. Plain speaking on our part might strengthen his position or it might help the Persian G[overnmen]t to dismiss him. But Sir G. Barclay would be the best judge.

L. M.

It would be better to wait, in any case until we have had some interchange of views with St. Petersburg.

A. N.
E. G.

(⁵) [Mr. Shuster's open letter to *The Times*, dated October 21, was printed in two sections on November 10 and 11. *cp. Siebert*, pp. 107–112, where reference is made to the article in *The Times* of October 18. Mr. Shuster's letter is reprinted in W. M. Shuster: *The Strangling of Persia*, pp. 313–26.]

(⁶) [*v. supra*, p. 813, No. 828.]

No. 831.

Sir Edwurd Grey to Mr. O'Beirne.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1195.

41961/39878/11/34.

Tel. (No. 639.)

Foreign Office, October 23, 1911, 9 p.m.

I have urged upon Russian Ambassador that an occupation of Northern Persia or even a military expedition would end the independence of Persia and entail a revision of the Anglo-Russian agreement about Persia. I could see no necessity for such a strong step.

The Ambassador had heard nothing of a military expedition being under consideration, but he said that Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] was much concerned at the prospect of Shuster getting control of everything in Persia. Russia could not stand a power in Persia that took no account of Russia at all.

I said I quite understood that if Russian interests were being undermined they must be protected, but Shuster had not effected anything: that was his complaint. We had prevented the appointment of Stokes at Teheran, no loan had been made by Seligman yet, and as the railway concession for which a British group was applying could only be obtained if it went into Russian sphere, the group had been told to send someone to St. Petersburg to arrange it with Russia.

(¹) [This telegram was repeated to Tehran (No. 317) on October 24.]

The fact that a private individual like Shuster had used adverse language was not a reason for destroying Persian independence. My latest information was that the Persian Gov[ernment] were themselves dissatisfied with Shuster. You should speak in same sense to Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs].

No. 832.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1195.

41995/39878/11/34.

Tel. (No. 254.)

St. Petersburg, October 24, 1911, 8.40 P.M.

Your telegram No. 639.⁽²⁾

I communicated your views to the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, who had not yet heard from the Russian Ambassador. His Excellency said that Russian Government were, like His Majesty's Government, anxious to respect the independence of Persia; and that so long as nothing detrimental to Russian interests was affected Russia would not take any action such as had been contemplated.

I asked His Excellency what arrangements would, in his opinion, remove any occasion for strong measures. He said that we might consider what would be the most convenient way of making Shuster understand that he must act in concert with the two Powers. He thought that this might be done in connection with the proposed Seligman loan. He understood that Seligman's representative was coming to St. Petersburg. If the two Powers agreed to loan they might attach certain conditions to it of which one would be that Russian Bank (and also, he presumed, the Imperial Bank of Persia) would participate.

His Excellency added that it was in general essential that the Persian Government should act in concert with the two Powers.

(Sent to Tehran.)

⁽¹⁾ [Copies of this telegram were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

No. 833.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. O'Beirne.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1195.

41995/39878/11/34.

Tel. (No. 648.)

Foreign Office, October 26, 1911, 3 P.M.

Your telegram No. 254 (Oct[ober] 24).⁽²⁾

I agree that independence of Persia must be one that is not unfriendly either to Russia or to us and I realize that geographical situation would make it impossible for Russia to tolerate a Government at Tehran that disregarded Russian interests. We shall certainly when necessary say this to Shuster and indeed have practically said so by refusing our consent to Stokes's resignation.

I think it is important that Persia should get some money; otherwise the Southern roads will remain blocked to our trade. I hope therefore that the Seligman loan will be arranged, as regards which we have from the first informed Seligman that Russian concurrence was necessary. We have no objection to half issue in Russia.

You can speak in sense of this telegram on first convenient opportunity.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Tehran (No. 321) on October 26.]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

No. 834.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1196.

Tehran, November 2, 1911.

43360/40890/11/34.

D. 3.25 P.M.

Tel. (No. 533.)

R. 4.10 P.M.

My private telegram of Oct[ober] 16.⁽²⁾ Please see also telegrams of Oct[ober] 9 and Oct[ober] 10 to the "Times."⁽³⁾

Russian Minister is to-day under instructions from his Gov[ernmen]t demanding the withdrawal from the principal property in question of Shuster's gendarmes who have remained in possession since the Russian Minister's disavowal of the Russian Consul-General. This demand notwithstanding that Russian Minister has obtained full assurances as to Russian rights is to be made on the ground that gendarmes were sent to take possession without previous notice to the Russian Consulate-General though property was mortgaged to the Russian Bank and leased to a Russian subject.

Russian Minister is also to demand from the M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] formal apology for an incident which occurred after the gendarmes had taken possession, two officials of the Consulate-General alleging that when passing property gendarmes in possession pointed their rifles at them and at Russian Consulate-General which is near. This is disputed by the officer commanding gendarmes. M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] had offered reparation for this incident in the event of story of the Consular officials being confirmed after a joint enquiry, but Russian Gov[ernmen]t have instructed Russian Minister to demand an apology before an enquiry.

⁽¹⁾ [A copy of this telegram was sent to the India Office.]

⁽²⁾ [Sir G. Barclay's private telegram of October 16, 1911, reported that M. Pokhetonov, Russian Consul-General at Tehran, had "quite unwarrantably interfered by force with the seizure by the Persian Government of certain properties of the ex-Shah's brothers which had been confiscated in consequence of the part their owners have taken in the insurrection." M. Poklevski-Koziell had disavowed M. Pokhetonov's action, but made reserves as to any Russian claims. (F.O. 371/1196. 43360/40890/11/34.) Communications were made to the British Foreign Office by the Persian Legation on October 16 and 17, complaining of the Russian action, and explaining that the seizure of the properties was "in consequence of the misdeeds of Shoa-es-Saltanah and Salar-ed-Devleh." (F.O. 371/1196. 40890/40890/11/34. 41044/40890/11/34.)]

⁽³⁾ [v. *The Times*, October 10, 1911, p. 6, and October 11, 1911, p. 3.]

No. 835.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1195.

43684/39878/11/34.

(No. 133.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, November 2, 1911.

The Persian Minister came to ask me to-day, privately and confidentially, whether I had reason to suppose that Russia intended to occupy northern Persia, or to send a large force there.

I replied that the Russian Government had taken no decision, except to send 100 men to Resht and 150 to Ispahan, as an increase of Consular guards. Should they decide to do anything else, we should of course hear of it from them.

The Persian Minister pressed me a great deal as to Russian intentions.

I said that I could not tell him any more than I had already told him; but I was sure that, if the Persian Government maintained a friendly attitude towards the Russian Government, the latter would not take any such step as he feared.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to Lord Crewe.]

He remarked that a Russian gunboat had assisted the Turcomans who were fighting for the ex-Shah, and had landed troops to the west of Astrabad.

I said that I had not heard of this; but I would enquire from you.⁽²⁾

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

⁽²⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No 329) of November 4, 1911, made this enquiry. (F.O. 371/1195. 43684/39878/11/34)]

No. 836.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1196.

43673/40890/11/34.

Tel. (No. 537.)

Tehran, November 5, 1911.

D. 5.8 p.m.

R. 6.45 p.m.

My telegram No. 533.⁽²⁾

I see no signs yet of the Persian Government yielding to Russian Government's humiliating demands, which are clearly aimed at Shuster.

Minister for Foreign Affairs sent me a message this morning begging me to influence Russian Minister for moderation, but I pointed out that demands had been formulated by Russian Government after deliberation. Russian Minister could not therefore modify them, and Persian Government would do well to yield.

⁽¹⁾ [A copy of this telegram was sent to the India Office.]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 817, No 834.]

No. 837.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1196.

43904/40890/11/34.

Tel. (No. 538.)

Tehran, November 6, 1911.

D. 1.30 p.m.

R. 1.45 p.m.

My immediately preceding telegram.⁽²⁾

Russian demands and the upholding of the Russian Consul-General's violence can, I think, only have been dictated by a determination to upset Shuster. for, as the Russian Minister has pointed out to his Government, such offence as there may have been in Shuster's gendarmes taking possession of the property on October 9th without previous formal notice to the Russian Consulate General was fully wiped out by the ejection of the gendarmes by the Russian Cossacks and on October 10th property was peaceably occupied as result of assurances exchanged between Russian Minister and Shuster.

I fear that Shuster will not consent to withdraw his gendarmes and that he is ready to face all consequences.

Should you be thinking of moving at St. Petersburg in the interest of moderation I should be glad if you would not shew any knowledge of a divergence between Russian Minister and Russian Consul-General.

⁽¹⁾ [A copy of this telegram was sent to the India Office.]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

No. 838.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1196.
43925/40890/11/34.
Tel. (No. 541.)

Tehran, November 6, 1911.
D. 5 P.M.
R. 5.30 P.M.

My telegram No. 538.⁽²⁾

Persian Gov[ernmen]t's reply though dignified and temperate in tone formally rejects the demands of the Russian Gov[ernmen]t as inconsistent with the dignity of Persia and with the friendly relations between the two Powers.

Persian Gov[ernmen]t declare they were innocent and say that the judgement of the Russian Gov[ernmen]t must be based on misapprehension of the facts. They declare their readiness to hold an inquiry for the full elucidation of all the circumstances. Persian Gov[ernmen]t's reply creates a serious situation as the Russian Gov[ernmen]t who formulated their demands after long deliberation can hardly be expected to draw back. Position is all the more awkward as the Russian Gov[ernmen]t now finds itself in the predicament of having to press to a finish an incident which arose through the unprovoked violence of the Russian Cons[ul]-Gen[eral] in regard to which Russian Min[ister] had expressed his disapproval.

Above is after consultation with Russian Min[ister] so can be used at Petersburg.

MINUTE

C[oun]t Benckendorff told me that he would send a tel[egram] to his Gov[ernmen]t in which he would say that we hoped a solution would be found of this difficulty. I explained to C[oun]t Benckendorff that we could not approach the Russian⁽³⁾ Gov[ernmen]t directly ourselves in the stage which the question had reached.

A. N.
E. G.

(1) [A copy of this telegram was sent to the India Office.]

(2) [v. immediately preceding document.]

(3) [Sir A. Nicolson's handwriting is difficult to decypher here. The word used may be "Persian." In a private letter to Mr. O'Beirne of November 8, 1911, Sir A. Nicolson refers to this conversation. His wording there is: "The question is hardly one in which we ourselves could directly intervene." Carnock MSS., Vol. V of 1911.]

No. 839.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1199.
43926/41203/11/34.
Tel. (No. 265.)

St. Petersburg, November 6, 1911.
D. 8.29 P.M.
R. 10.45 P.M.

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs to-day again spoke to me pessimistically about Persia, saying that the relations between the Russian and Persian Governments were extremely strained.

He referred to a conflict which occurred some time ago between Shuster's gendarmes and some Cossacks placed by the Russian consul-general as guard over certain property in which Russian Bank was interested, and which Persian Government desired to seize. Persian Government had demanded recall of consul-general. Russian Minister had of course returned the Persian note. If the Persian Government acquiesced in return of note, incident would be closed, but if they persisted in their demands, situation would be very serious, and he did not know what action Russian Government would take.

Further, His Excellency said that Shuster had appointed three Englishmen as assistant treasurers at Shiraz, Ispahan, and Tabreez respectively. Russian

(1) [Copies of this telegram were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

Government did not object to the two first-named appointments, but Mr. Lecoffre, who had been appointed to Tabreez, was personally antagonistic to Russia. Russian Minister had been instructed to object to appointment, and the Persian Government must give way in the matter.

I said that the three appointments had been made without Sir G. Barclay's knowledge, which assurance his Excellency readily accepted. I begged him, if the Persian reply in regard to consul-general was unsatisfactory to Russia, to give me early notice, and he promised to do so.

(Sent to Tehran.)

No. 840.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1199.

43506/42599/11/34.

Tel. (No. 330.)

Foreign Office, November 6, 1911.

Your tel[egram] No. 534.⁽²⁾ The app[ointmen]t of Mr. Lecoffre will assuredly be displeasing and cause much annoyance to the Russians who may probably take strong measures to defend their interests even to the point of an occupation of Northern Persia. You should point out to Mr. Shuster the probable consequences if he continues to provoke Russia and strongly advise him to do his utmost to conciliate the Russian Legation. It should be made clear to him that the Russian Gov[ernmen]t could employ means which he would be unable to withstand and which would gravely hamper him in the execution of his duties, and the appointment of British subjects to administrative posts in the North of Persia is certain to provoke measures by the Russians to protect their own influence there; measures which we cannot deprecate consistently with the spirit of the Anglo-Russian agreement. The Russian impression is that under cover of Shuster's administration Russian influence is being displaced by British in Northern Persia, to change which we are pledged to avoid.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to St. Petersburg (No. 667). A copy was sent to the India Office. Count Benckendorff was informed of the substance of this telegram.]

⁽²⁾ [Sir G. Barclay's telegram (No. 534) of November 2, 1911, D. 5.50 P.M., R. 5 P.M., reported the appointment of Mr. Lecoffre, a British subject, as Treasury agent at Tabriz. It stated that he had "strong Nationalist sympathies." (F.O. 371/1199. 43506/42599/11/34.)]

No. 841.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.

F.O. 371/1196.

44555/40890/11/34.

(No. 184.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, November 8, 1911.

The Persian Min[ister] asked Sir A. Nicolson to-day if we would not support his Gov[ernmen]t in the question of the Shoa es Sultaneh and the difficulty which had arisen with Russia.⁽¹⁾ Sir A. Nicolson told him that we were aware of the facts, but that it was very difficult for H[is] M[ajesty's] Gov[ernmen]t to intervene in a difference between the Persian Gov[ernmen]t and Russia. Sir G. Barclay, he said, was well acquainted with all the facts, and was in intimate relations with the Russian Min[ister], and it seemed to him that such questions had better be settled locally.

⁽¹⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 817, No. 834, and note ⁽²⁾.]

The Persian Min[iste]r was a little puzzled with the vagueness of the reply, but Sir A. Nicolson did not wish to give him any ground for thinking we should support Persia, though one feels that she has a certain right on her side.

We cannot interfere between Persia and Russia in matters in the Russian sphere of interest that do not concern us.

[I am, &c.]
E. G[REY].

No. 842.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1196.
44586/40890/11/34.
Tel. (No. 271.)

St. Petersburg, November 10, 1911.
D. 7·39 P.M.
R. 8·30 P.M.

Russo-Persian incident.

My telegram No. 265 (of Nov[ember] 6).⁽²⁾

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs informs me that matter stands as follows:—

Russian Minister at Tehran made verbally three demands of the Persian Government—that they should take back their note demanding the recall of the consul-general, that they should express regret for insults offered by gendarmes to consular officials, and that gendarmes should be replaced by Persian Cossacks. The Persian Government declined the last two demands, asking for a joint enquiry into the facts. The Russian Minister has now been instructed to present the same demands in writing, asking for an immediate reply. This he is probably doing to-day.

(Confidential.)

If in two days he does not receive a satisfactory reply he is to inform the Persian Government that relations are broken off, and that Russia will “take measures.” The measure determined on is to send a Russian force to Kazvin of sufficient strength to permit of a detachment being summoned by the Russian Minister to Tehran, which will remove the gendarmes and replace them by Persian Cossacks, and having done so will return to Kazvin.

As regards the Persian demand for a joint enquiry, the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs states that the insult complained of is vouched for by two consular officials and a Russian officer. The only other witnesses who could be questioned are the gendarmes themselves.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Tehran (as No. 342). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 819–20, No. 839.]

No. 843.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1196.
45113/40890/11/34.
Tel. (No. 277.)

St. Petersburg, November 13, 1911.
D. 9·47 P.M.
R. 10 P.M.

My telegram No. 271.⁽²⁾

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs informed me this evening that Acting Minister at Tehran had not as yet reported any reply from the Persian Government

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Tehran (as No. 346). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. immediately preceding document.*]

to the Russian note. He expressed belief that Shuster would influence Persian Government to resist Russian demands. His Excellency referred to a fresh difficulty created by Shuster in addressing a circular to Russian subjects in Persia requiring them to furnish direct to him particulars of leases held by them, failing which their rights would not be recognised by Persian Government. His Excellency said that this procedure was entirely contrary to Persian usage. He further expressed apprehension that Shuster would maintain Mr. Lecoffre's appointment notwithstanding Russia's protest. He remarked that he could see no issue from the difficulties of the situation.

I remarked that it seemed to me personally the only issue consisted in bringing the Persian Government to terminate Shuster's appointment, even if it would involve payment of an indemnity. Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs feared that Persian Government would not have the courage to take this step in the teeth of opposition from the Medjliss.

No. 844.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 371/1195.
45845/37059/11/34.
Tel. (No. 278.)

St. Petersburg, November 14, 1911.⁽¹⁾
D. 12.3 P.M.
R. 2.50 P.M.

Your telegram No. 679.⁽²⁾

Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] stated yesterday that the Russian Gov[ernment] had intimated to Swedish Gov[ernment] that the proposed loan of Swedish officers for the purpose indicated would not be agreeable to Russia. Swedish Gov[ernment] had acquiesced in Russian Gov[ernment]'s wishes without further explanations and Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] thought it would not be necessary to give any.

Real views of Russian Gov[ernment] (though they could not well be put before the Swedish Gov[ernment]) were, Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] stated, that any future increase of Persia's army in the North should take the form of a development of Cossack Brigade which was only nucleus of organised force now existing. Russia did not desire creation of an independent force which would come into rivalry with the Brigade. Persian troops now existing were not worth considering but it would be otherwise were they to be organised by foreign officers.

I asked what reasons H[is] E[xc]ellency proposed to give the Persian Gov[ernment] if they pressed the proposal. He said that the question required consideration.

Your telegram No. 688 just received.⁽³⁾

I will speak as instructed on the earliest opportunity, but I fear this is a question of policy as to which it would be difficult to move Russian Gov[ernment].

Not sent to Tehran.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Tehran (as No. 347). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations]

⁽²⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 679) of November 10, 1911, D. 10.30 P.M., stated that the Swedish Government had been privately approached by the Persian Government with regard to the employment of Swedish officers to organize the Persian army, and asked the opinion of His Majesty's Government. Sir Edward Grey said that before replying he would like to consult the Russian Government. (F.O. 371/1195. 44528/37059/11/34.)]

⁽³⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 688) of November 13, 1911, D. 6 P.M., instructed Mr. O'Beirne to point out at St Petersburg the advantages of the employment of Swedish officers for the organization of the Persian Army. (F.O. 371/1195. 44748/37059/11/34.)]

No. 845.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. O'Beirne.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1196.

45113/40890/11/34.

Tel. (No. 691.)

*Foreign Office, November 14, 1911, 7.45 P.M.*Your telegram No. 277 (of Nov[ember] 13).⁽²⁾

I hope steps taken by Russian Gov[ernment]t will not go beyond what Russian Embassy here has told me are their intentions; that is to send a detachment to Kazvin and not to send any of it to Tehran unless required by Russian Minister for protection of Legation. It would be deplorable if a crisis were precipitated that led to a Russian occupation and the overthrow of Persian Gov[ernment]t.

Could not Russian Gov[ernment]t formulate their complaints against Shuster's action and make a formal demand respecting them. Those referred to in your telegram seem better founded than dispute about Shoa-es-Sultaneh's property⁽³⁾ as regards which version of facts that has reached us makes it appear that there has been some misunderstanding.

I see that the Russian Gov[ernment]t having taken their view of this must carry their point, but real and more substantial difficulty appears to be Shuster's Anti-Russian policy in Northern Persia and it is for Russian Gov[ernment]t to make public their own case against that.

You should speak to Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] in this sense.

(1) [This telegram was repeated to Tehran (No. 349).]

(2) [*v. supra*, pp. 821-2, No. 843.]

(3) [*cp. supra*, p. 817, No. 834, and *note* (2).]

No. 846.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1196.

45358/40890/11/34.

Tel. (No. 279.)

St. Petersburg, November 14, 1911.

D. 8 P.M.

R. 7.50 P.M.

My telegram No. 277.⁽²⁾

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs informed me this evening that he had not yet heard from Russian Minister at Tehran, and intimated that, failing a satisfactory reply to-morrow morning, Russian Government would take measures.

I referred to press reports that Persian Regent and Ministers had resigned, and I said that while present question was the concern of Russia it also indirectly interested His Majesty's Government, and therefore I would suggest to his Excellency whether it would not be more generous under the circumstances for Russia to name a term—say, a week—within which her demands must be satisfied. His Excellency replied that it was certain in that case whoever held office would resign at the expiration of the week's grace. Resignation was clearly only a device to avoid compliance.

His Excellency further said that if Russia took measures decided upon she would give His Majesty's Government same assurances as on the former occasion when troops were sent to Kazvin.

(1) [This telegram was sent to Tehran (as No. 350). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

(2) [*v. supra*, pp. 821-2, No. 843.]

No. 847.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1196.
45518/40890/11/34.
Tel. (No. 281.)

St. Petersburg, November 15, 1911.
D. 8·47 P.M.
R. 8·15 P.M.

My telegram No. 279.⁽²⁾

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs informed me this evening that Russian Minister at Tehran had reported that Persian Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs had resigned, and that there was no prospect of prompt compliance with Russian demands. His Excellency said that his personal opinion was that, under these circumstances, Russia must take action at once.

I earnestly pressed his Excellency to give Persia a further period of grace. Russia could declare that, having regard to resignation of Persian Ministers, she would suspend action, but that if in three days her demands were not satisfied she would land troops. Although his Excellency would not give me a definite answer, he held out some hope that the Russian Government might adopt this course. In that case, he contemplated adding a further demand that the officials responsible for action of gendarmerie, including Shuster, should be removed. He said that he must consider matter further.

MINUTE

We sh[oul]d not be sorry to see Shuster removed.

R. G. V.
Nov[ember] 16.
A. P.
L. M.
A. N.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Tehran (as No. 351). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

No. 848.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1196.
45519/40890/11/34.
Tel. (No. 282.)

St. Petersburg, November 15, 1911.
D. 8·47 P.M.
R. 8·15 P.M.

Your telegram No. 691.⁽²⁾

I spoke as directed to Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs.

He said that it was absolutely necessary for Russia to effect withdrawal of the gendarmerie from the house in dispute, both because of the insulting conduct of the gendarmes towards Russian consular officials and because of the violent manner in which they had taken possession of the property, on which occasion they had disarmed Persian Cossacks. It was to effect this purpose that a detachment was, if necessary, to be sent from Kazvin to Tehran.

As regards formulating of demands concerning Shuster, his Excellency remarked that it was difficult, from a formal point of view, to object to appointments such as that at Tabreez, as this would constitute an interference in Persian internal affairs.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Tehran (as No. 352). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 823, No. 845.]

He is, however, now thinking of demanding Shuster's dismissal on the ground of his responsibility for action of gendarmerie (see my telegram No. 281⁽³⁾).

(Confidential.)

It is plain that the dispute concerning sequestered property developed into a conflict between the consul-general and the Cossacks on one side and Shuster and the gendarmes on the other, and that the Russian Government consider that their prestige is gravely involved.

(³) [v. immediately preceding document.]

No. 849.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. O'Beirne.

F.O. 371/1196.

45519/40890/11/34.

Tel. (No. 694.)

Foreign Office, November 16, 1911, 2.45 P.M.

Your telegram No. 282 (Nov[ember] 15).⁽¹⁾

It is of course for Russia to decide and formulate her own demands, but I am much concerned as to possible ulterior consequences of measures that she may take, especially their effect upon basis of Anglo-Russian Agreement. To send 2,000 troops to Teheran and to occupy it by force might react upon Mahommedan feeling in India; and if we appeared to be a consenting party to it effect might be prejudicial in India especially at moment of King's visit.

I should have thought Russia might formulate her demands after arrival of detachment at Kazvin and give further time before taking any other step. The step we should ourselves probably take in first instance to secure redress of a grievance would be seizure of Customs houses and I do not see why Russia should not adopt this course, if necessary, and wait for effect of pressure caused thereby. You should speak in this sense to Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs].

(Very Confidential.)

I fear that Russian Consul-General at Teheran may be no friend to Anglo-Russian agreement and may arrange incidents so as to force hand of Russian Gov[ernment]. It would be deplorable if Russian Consul-General or subordinate Russian officials in Persia were allowed to upset the agreement and deflect or embarrass thereby the whole general policy of Russia and England. This consideration might be urged by Ambassador when he returns.

We are quite satisfied that Russian Minister at Teheran is loyal to Anglo-Russian Agreement.

(¹) [v. immediately preceding document.]

No. 850.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1196.

45812/40890/11/34.

Tel. (No. 580.)

Tehran, November 17, 1911.

D. 12.30 P.M.

R. 1.30 P.M.

Petersburg tel[egram] No. 282.⁽²⁾

It is not easy to see how the removal of Shuster could be affected unless Russia took over the administration and dismissed him herself.

(¹) [Copies of this telegram were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations]

(²) [v. *supra*, pp. 824-5, No. 848.]

I see no likelihood of his resigning under outside pressure or of Medjliss permitting his dismissal by the Persian Gov[ernmen]t.

But, even were Russia to succeed in obtaining his removal by the Persian Gov[ernmen]t, disappearance of this one prop of the administration would probably lead to such a collapse as would equally afford ground for Russian intervention.

No. 851.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1196.

46042/40890/11/34.

Tel. (No. 698.)

Foreign Office, November 17, 1911, 1.15 p.m.

My telegram No. 694 (of Nov[ember] 16) to Mr. O'Beirne.⁽²⁾ You may make it quite clear to Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] that we have no reason to object, if they formulate a demand for dismissal of Shuster. I don't suggest it, but it is possible that Russian Gov[ernmen]t think we have some desire to favour him, which is not the case.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Paris (No. 481).]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 825, No. 849.]

No. 852.

Communication from M. de Etter.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1196.

46280/40890/11/34.

Confidentielle.

Russian Embassy, London, November 17, 1911.

Le Gouvernement Britannique n'ignore pas que le Gouvernement Persan avait revêtu ces derniers temps, dans ses rapports avec la Russie, un caractère notoirement inamical et que la responsabilité de cette attitude doit retomber principalement sur le conseiller financier, M. Morgan Shuster qui, depuis son arrivée en Perse, s'est plu systématiquement à ignorer les intérêts de la Russie.

Le Gouvernement Persan a perdu du terrain et s'est trouvé en grande partie impuissant vis-à-vis de M. Shuster par suite de l'appui dont il s'est assuré auprès du Médjliss et du parti nationaliste.

Un incident regrettable a surgi dernièrement à Téhéran provoqué par l'intention du Gouvernement Persan de confisquer les propriétés des partisans de l'ancien Shah Mohamed Ali, et entre autres, celles du Prin[c]e Shao-es-Saltaneh, dans lesquelles des intérêts Russes se trouvent engagés.

M. Shuster, chargé d'exécuter cette mesure, y a encore procédé d'une façon provocante vis-à-vis de nous : Les gendarmes placés sous ses ordres ne se sont pas seulement permis d'occuper de force l'immeuble du Prince avant que les pour-parlers à ce propos entre les Représentants de M. Shuster et le Consul Général de Russie aient pris fin, et de déloger les Kosaques Persans, auxquels était confiée la garde de la maison,—ils ont de plus visé les Représentants du Consulat Général avec l'intention évidente de décharger contre eux leurs fusils.

De son côté le Gouvernement Persan—contrairement à toutes les traditions—s'est crû autorisé de nous adresser deux notes exigeant le rappel du Conseil Général et du personnel du Consulat Général de Russie.

⁽¹⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's despatch (No 298) to Sir G. Buchanan and his despatch (No. 140) to Sir G. Barclay of November 22, 1911, forwarded copies of this memorandum. For M. Neratov's instructions, v. *Siebert*, pp. 116-7.]

Jugeant ces actes inadmissibles tant au point de vue du prestige, que des intérêts de la Russie, le Gouvernement Impérial a chargé le Ministre à Téhéran, premièrement, de renvoyer au Gouvernement Persan les deux notes précitées et de lui notifier verbalement l'exigence de remplacer les gendarmes financiers par les Kosaques Persans jusqu'à ce qu'il ne soit établi dans quelle mesure les intérêts des sujets Russes se trouvent engagés dans les propriétés de Shao-es-Saltaneh,—et secondement: d'exiger que le Gouvernement Persan fasse des excuses, par le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères, pour la façon de procéder des gendarmes Persans.

Contrairement à notre attente ces exigences modérées ont été rejetées par le Gouvernement Persan et, par suite, le Gouvernement Impérial s'est vu obligé de charger M. Poklewski de renouveler ses représentations par écrit, en ajoutant que nous nous attendons à ce que nos demandes soient exécutées sans le moindre retard et que dans le cas contraire il cesserait tous rapports avec le Gouvernement Persan et que la Russie se réserverait de prendre telles mesures qu'elle jugera nécessaires.

Aucune réponse n'ayant été reçue jusqu'ici du Gouvernement Persan, notre Ministre a reçu l'ordre de cesser tous rapports avec ce dernier. En même temps le Gouvernement Impérial, considérant que ses intérêts ont été sérieusement lésés et, que par suite, une pression de sa part sur le Gouvernement Persan s'imposait, a décidé d'envoyer dès maintenant à Kazvine un détachement se composant de différentes armes, en laissant au Ministre la faculté d'appeler à Téhéran une force suffisante pour éloigner les gendarmes Persans, occupant actuellement la maison et la propriété de Shao-es-Saltaneh.

Ces mesures, nécessitées par les circonstances susindiquées, revêtent certainement un caractère purement provisoire. Aussitôt que l'incident sera clos et que des garanties quant à l'attitude correcte ultérieure vis-à-vis de nous du Gouvernement Persan seront assurées, notre détachement sera rappelé en Russie.

Le compte rendu télégraphique sur la réponse, faite par Sir E. Grey à l'interpellation au Parlement à cet effet,⁽²⁾ a été très favorablement accueilli par le Gouvernement Impérial.

Nous considérons de notre côté que les mesures prises par nous ne sont nullement en contradiction avec le principe de notre entente avec l'Angleterre pour les affaires de Perse, et nous sommes décidés à ne pas dévier de la ligne de conduite poursuivie jusqu'ici basée sur l'esprit de solidarité complète et de coopération avec l'Angleterre.

Londres, le 4/17 novembre, 1911.

⁽²⁾ [This reference cannot be identified with certainty; but *cp. Parl. Deb., 5th Ser., (House of Commons), Vol. 31, pp. 207-8.*]

No. 853.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1196.
46034/40890/11/34.
Tel. (No. 286.)

St. Petersburg, November 18, 1911.

D. 12-50 A.M.

R. 11-40 A.M.

Confidential. I spoke to M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] this afternoon as instructed in your telegram No. 694.⁽²⁾

H[is] E[xcellency] said that whatever happened, the principle on which the Anglo-Russian understanding was based would be kept intact and that nothing which the Russian Government might do would strike at the integrity of Persia.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Tehran (as No. 358). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 825, No. 849.]

As regards what you said respecting seizure of customs houses H[is] E[xc]ellency told me that the Russian Government had, after consideration, rejected the measure as not likely to carry serious weight with the Persian Government. It was necessary, he considered to take more decisive action in order to bring that Government to reason. On my pressing him to give the Persian Government further time for consideration before ordering an advance on Tehran, H[is] E[xc]ellency said that Russian troops only reached Khazvin in three days and that this gave the Persian Government ample time for a decision. I urged that when the Russian troops arrived at Kazvin he might warn Persian Government for the last time of the serious consequences that a refusal of the Russian demands would entail; but H[is] E[xc]ellency declared that now that the Russian Minister had broken off relations this was impossible, and that moreover as Russia had presented her demands she could not without loss of prestige again approach Persian Government. He also refused to send a message through the Persian Chargé d'Affaires here. As he told me further that as the Russian troops advance the more would Russian demands be raised I asked as a personal suggestion whether he thought it would answer a useful purpose were Sir G. Barclay to inform the Persian Government that we had been told that unless they gave Russia immediate satisfaction, not only would Tehran be occupied, but fresh demands be insisted upon. H[is] E[xc]ellency said that whether it succeeded or not he would have no objection to our making such a communication.

Speaking on the situation in general I told H[is] E[xc]ellency how ardently you desire maintenance of a close understanding with Russia and reminded him how you had already done your best to meet Russia's wishes, citing the cases of Stokes and Lecoffre, and how you had frequently defended her action when subjected to attacks in Parliament; H[is] E[xc]ellency must however remember that you had to take into account English public opinion. The reports received by us with regard to present incident did not tally altogether with the Russian account and it would be very difficult for you to justify an armed intervention. Whatever provocation Russia might have received the fact remained that Russia has tried to prevent confiscation of property belonging to one of the leaders of the late rebellion. His Excellency repeated explanation he had already given to Mr. O'Beirne laying stress on the facts that the Persian Government had failed to notify to the Russian Legation the name of the person whose property was to be seized and that the implements belonging to Russian farmers who had leased the property had been taken. He also cited the conciliatory attitude adopted by Russia respecting Mr. New's appointment and that of another Englishman at Ispahan and said that it was piling up of one provocation after another that had forced Russia to take action.

On my speaking in the sense of the two last paragraphs of your telegram marked very confidential, His Excellency declared that there was no reason to suspect the Russian Consul-General of trying to create incidents and that there was no danger of our agreement being compromised by subordinate Russian officials in Persia. Consul-General had found himself in a position in which he was obliged to act, though H[is] E[xc]ellency admitted he might have proceeded more judiciously. H[is] E[xc]ellency told me in strict confidence that the subaltern official sent to house which was being seized would shortly be recalled for having exceeded instructions given him by the Consul-General. Major Stokes, he added, who was still living with Shuster was also a subordinate.

In the course of conversation H[is] E[xc]ellency gave me to understand that what the Russian Government really want is to get rid of Shuster. I pointed out difficulties in the way of this now that the Medjliss had decided to remain in permanent session but H[is] E[xc]ellency observed that elections might be held at an earlier date than that fixed and that new Assembly might prove more amenable. He seemed to think that the Regent would, in any case remain and as the conversation turned on what would happen should he go, I warned him that under no

circumstances could H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] consent to the return of the ex-Shah.

Before leaving I asked him to tell me frankly whether the Russian Government contemplated a lengthy occupation of Khazvin or of Tehran, observing that such a measure would be generally regarded as the first step towards a protectorate and that this would be a direct infraction of the agreement. H[is] E[xcellency] replied that measures now being taken were of a provisional character and that their sole object was to obtain satisfaction for Russian grievances. I then enquired what satisfaction would induce Russia to withdraw her troops; H[is] E[xcellency] said that she would recall them as soon as she was notified of Shuster's dismissal, and that were this satisfaction conceded she would even withdraw her demands for the replacing of gendarmerie by Persian cossacks in the seized property.

MINUTES.

I think we should take note of the assurance of withdrawal and instruct Sir G. Barclay in the sense suggested on p. 2.⁽³⁾

We will wait till Sir G. Barclay gives his view as he is sure to do.

L. M.

A. N.

E. G.

⁽³⁾ [The reference is to the penultimate sentence of p. 828, paragraph 1.]

No. 854.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1196.

St. Petersburg, November 19, 1911.

46054/40890/11/84.

D. 6.55 P.M.

Tel. (No. 288.)

R. 10 P.M.

I saw President of Council this afternoon, and conveyed to him flattering messages from the King and yourself.⁽²⁾

His Excellency, who was evidently greatly pleased, said that as Minister of Finance he had co-operated with M. Isvolsky for establishment of Anglo-Russian understanding, and that as President of Council he would devote all his efforts to maintain it. Emperor also warmly desired it, and he would at once inform His Majesty of what I had told him.

I said that best way to avoid possible misunderstandings was for us always to be perfectly frank with each other. His Excellency heartily agreed, and I then proceeded to speak of Persia, using much the same language as in my conversation with Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs reported in my telegram No. 286.⁽³⁾ I also enquired what answer I might return to your telegram No. 699.⁽⁴⁾ President of Council said that I might assure you that Russia had no aggressive designs whatever on Persia, but that she had been obliged to vindicate her dignity, which had been outraged by a series of provocative acts which had culminated in the seizure of a property that had been mortgaged to the Russian Bank as security for a debt incurred by Shoa-es-Sultaneh. It had been impossible for her to act otherwise in view of excited state of Russian

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Tehran (as No 360). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. infra*, pp. 847-8, No. 875.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. immediately preceding document.*]

⁽⁴⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 699) of November 17, 1911, D 4.10 P.M., asked if His Majesty's Government could state that they had received assurances that the troops sent to Kazvin were proceeding under the same conditions as before. (F.O. 371/1196. 45803/40890/11/34.)]

public opinion. Russia's troops would be withdrawn as soon as her two demands had been complied with, namely, a formal apology to Russian Minister by Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs and the replacing of gendarmerie by Persian Cossacks in the seized property. His Excellency said that you might make a statement in above sense, but that Kazvin precedent of 1909⁽⁵⁾ hardly applied to present case.

I pressed his Excellency not to order advance on Tehran directly troops reached Kazvin, but to allow time for the occupation of the latter town to produce its effect. I communicated to him substance of Sir G. Barclay's telegram No. 583,⁽⁶⁾ without mentioning the request for mediation. His Excellency eventually promised to accord such a delay.

I told him, as authorised by your telegram No. 698,⁽⁷⁾ that we would not object to demand for Shuster's dismissal. His Excellency said, however, he had not yet discussed with Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs question of formulating further demands beyond those given above in event of Persian answer being unduly delayed or proving unsatisfactory.

Nothing could have been more explicit than his Excellency's language. He gave me his word of honour that Russia would not annex a single province, and that she would not violate integrity of Persia, which formed the basis of our understanding. He also assured me that the Russian Government had no idea of supporting the ex-Shah, and were having no dealings with him.

MINUTES.

This tel[egram] will be very useful in view of the P[arliamentary] Q[uestion]s⁽⁸⁾ that are certain to come. It does not quite accord with No 286⁽⁹⁾ resp[ectin]g Shuster, but it is just as well that Shuster's dismissal has not been formulated as a condition. Para[graph] 4 is satisfactory, and, with Sir G. Barclay's No. 583⁽⁶⁾ (46055) offers a possibility of a speedy solution.

R. G. V.

Nov[ember] 20.

A. P.

This seems to dispose of Sir G. Barclay's objection to advising compliance with Russian demands. The occupation of Tehran would be so disastrous that I think he ought to do what he can to persuade the Persians to surrender, though his advice may not have much effect.

Qy. Approve Sir G. Buchanan and instruct him to inform the Russian G[overnmen]t that you appreciate the President of the Council's frankness and friendly sentiments, and are glad to hear that when the two demands of the Russian Gov[ernmen]t are complied with the troops will be withdrawn, and also that delay will be accorded before an advance to Tehran takes place.⁽¹⁰⁾

L. M.

A N.

⁽⁵⁾ [*cp supra*, pp. 735-6, No. 746]

⁽⁶⁾ [Sir G. Barclay's telegram (No. 583) of November 18, 1911, D. 8-10 p.m., R. 7-30 p.m., stated that a reply would be sent to the Russian Government as soon as the new Persian Cabinet had been formed. It stated further that the Russian Minister had broken off relations with the Minister for Foreign Affairs that afternoon. (F.O. 371/1196. 46055/40890/11/34.)]

⁽⁷⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 826, No. 851.]

⁽⁸⁾ [*v. Parl. Deb.*, 5th Ser., (House of Commons), Vol. 32, pp. 181, 560-3, 996-8, 1201-2, 1558-60.]

⁽⁹⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 827-9, No. 853]

⁽¹⁰⁾ [*v immediately succeeding document.*]

No. 855.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1196.

46054/40890/11/34.

Tel. (No. 702.)

*Foreign Office, November 20, 1911, 4.30 P.M.*Your tel[egram] No. 288 (of Nov[ember] 19).⁽²⁾ I approve your language.

You should inform Russian Gov[ernmen]t that I appreciate the President of the Council's frankness and friendly sentiments and am glad to hear that when the two demands of the Russian Gov[ernmen]t are complied with the troops will be withdrawn and also that delay will be accorded before an advance to Tehran takes place.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Tehran (No. 362).]⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document]

No. 856.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1196.

46471/40890/11/34.

Tel. (No. 704.)

Foreign Office, November 20, 1911, 6 P.M.

Persian Minister has on behalf of Persian Gov[ernmen]t asked my advice. I have replied that Russian demands are a formal apology and that Treasury gendarmes should be replaced by Persian Cossacks. I said that Persia had no choice but to comply. Persian Minister said that Persian Gov[ernmen]t would at once comply with these two demands if assured that Russian troops would be stopped and if we would intervene for this purpose. I replied that I understood Russia considered her honour to be involved and I did not suppose she would admit official intervention, nor could I give any assurance on her behalf as to troops; all I could do was to make known at St. Petersburg what Persian Minister had said. I advised his Gov[ernmen]t to comply with the two demands of Russia at once as time was lost by making conditions. Persian Minister urged that position of Persian Gov[ernmen]t would be untenable if they complied and troops were not stopped and withdrawn. He assured me that he was in a position to promise that compliance with demands would be carried out.

Persian Minister spoke to me of merits of the dispute. I said I could not go into this; it was Russian not British, interest in the property that was involved, but Shuster's attitude generally had been so regardless of Russia and even so provocative that Russia could not be expected to take a lenient view of this incident.

You should inform Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] Persian Minister's communication gives me impression that a settlement can be effected. I am ready to communicate formally views of Russian Gov[ernmen]t if they desire it.

You may use your discretion as to suggesting to Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] that, having heard through me that Persian Gov[ernmen]t are ready to comply with the two demands stipulated for by President of the Council, he should allow Russian Minister at Teheran to arrange the matter either formally by renewal of diplomatic relations, or informally at Teheran.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Tehran (No. 364)]

No. 857.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1196.
46865/40890/11/34.
Tel. (No. 290.)

St. Petersburg, November 20, 1911.
D. 8.20 P.M.
R. 9 P.M.

My telegram No. 288.⁽²⁾

I informed Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs this afternoon of the conversation which I had yesterday with the President of the Council, and repeated to him what I had been instructed by your telegram No. 698⁽³⁾ to say about Shuster.

His Excellency said that he was very grateful for this communication, and told me confidentially that he had sounded the United States Government on the subject of Shuster, and had received the assurance that they would not intervene in any way in his favour.

As regards eventual withdrawal of Russian troops, his Excellency gave me to understand that, if the Russian demands were conceded by the time that they reached Persian territory, the troops would be withdrawn without further demands being formulated, but that, if they proceeded further, Russian Government might have to ask for something more, and that Shuster's dismissal would then probably be insisted upon. He was afraid, however, that this would be very difficult to obtain.

President of Council yesterday attached no such condition to their withdrawal.

MINUTES.

The Persian Gov[ernmen]t might be more willing to adopt a sensible attitude if they knew that compliance with the Russian demands would be followed by the immediate withdrawal of the troops.

It might be worth while to suggest to the Russian Gov[ernmen]t that we should tell the Persian Gov[ernmen]t this.

H. N.
L. M.

I think we sent a tel[egram] to Sir G. Barclay (one was drafted) yesterday saying that we had every reason to understand that Russian troops would be withdrawn. This I sh[oul]d think would be sufficient.

A. N.

The telegram that I sent yesterday evening will do.⁽⁴⁾

E. G.

(1) [This telegram was sent to Tehran (as No. 365). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

(2) [*v. supra*, pp 829-30, No. 854.]

(3) [*v. supra*, p. 826, No. 851.]

(4) [*cp. supra*, p. 831, No. 855, and *note* (1). A further telegram (No. 363) of November 20, D. 4.30 P.M., to Sir G. Barclay repeated this information emphatically. (F.O. 371/1196. 46054/40890/11/34.)]

No. 858.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1196.
46539/40890/11/34.
Tel. (No. 291.)

St. Petersburg, November 21, 1911.
D. 8.16 P.M.
R. 10.15 P.M.

Your telegrams Nos. 702⁽²⁾ and 704.⁽³⁾

I have acted as instructed. Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs begged me to thank you for your communication, which was most important, and for your offer

(1) [This telegram was sent to Tehran (as No. 368). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

(2) [*v. supra*, p. 831, No. 855.]

(3) [*v. supra*, p. 831, No. 856.]

to act as intermediary. Before, however, giving me a definite answer he must consult President of the Council, but he personally thought that assurance asked for by the Persian Government might be given if the Russian troops, who ought to arrive at Enzeli by Thursday, had not disembarked before a settlement had been effected.

I suggested that telegraphic orders might be sent to delay disembarkation, but he said that if the weather was bad it would have to be carried out at once.

His Excellency then proceeded to say that it seemed a pity not to profit by the present incident to establish a normal state of things at Tehran. It was to the interest of the British as well as the Russian Government that this should be done. At present constitution worked in a one-sided manner. Medjliss had arrogated to itself executive powers which did not belong to it, and it would be well to restrict its rôle to a purely legislative one, to constitute a Senate and to increase powers of the Regent. Then there was Shuster, and as long as he remained there would be constant friction and no hope of arriving at a settlement of questions still pending like that of Mr. Lecoffre's appointment.

I replied that if the Russian troops were to remain in Persia till this programme had been carried through they would have to stay there for months. President of the Council had, I said, attached no conditions to their withdrawal beyond compliance with the two demands already presented, nor had he qualified it by saying that those demands must be complied with before troops reached Persian territory. By promising to accord a delay before their arrival at Kazvin he had evidently had that place in his mind when he gave me assurance about their withdrawal. It was a matter to which I knew you attached great importance, and I would suggest that Russian Government should adhere strictly to the assurance given by President of the Council, and that when the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs presented apologies to the Russian Minister latter should tell him that troops had been recalled in the confident hope that Persian Government would now enter into negotiations with him for settlement of all outstanding questions and for placing relations on a friendly and stable basis. I was sure that if this was done you would give Russian Government all the support you could in their endeavours to settle outstanding questions.

As his Excellency observed that Persian Government had not been informed of assurance given to me by President of the Council, I told him that Sir G. Barclay had been instructed to tell them that if they complied with the two demands we had every reason to believe that troops would be recalled, and that you had given these instructions in the hope of accelerating a settlement.

His Excellency said that he was as anxious as you were to have troops recalled, but that when once this step had been taken Russian Government would be powerless to obtain guarantees for the future or to prevent recurrence of incidents entailing the dispatch of fresh troops. He would see me again to-morrow after discussing the matter with President of the Council.

MINUTES.

In view of the step which we have taken at Tehran on the strength of M. Kokovtsov's assurance (see 46542)⁽⁴⁾ it is to be hoped that the Russian Gov[ernmen]t will adhere strictly to the course which H[is] E[xc]ellency has indicated. We must await the result of the

(4) [M. Kokovtsov's assurance is given *supra*, pp. 829-30, No. 854. Sir G. Barclay's telegram (No. 594) of November 21, 1911, D. 5.30 p.m., R. 8 p.m., reported that "Orders signed by all the Ministers have been sent to Shuster to withdraw gendarmes and hand over properties to delegates of Persian Government, and Cossack Brigade has been ordered to furnish guards." Sir G. Barclay stated further that he had been assured "that Minister for Foreign Affairs will apologise as soon as Cabinet has been presented to Medjliss." (F.O. 371/1196. 46542/40890/11/34.)]

interview between MM. Kokovtsoff and Neratow which will probably cause the latter to modify his view.

We might approve Sir G. Buchanan by despatch.

H. N.

Nov[ember] 22, 1911.

It is a pity that order could not be sent to delay disembarkation but the apology is apparently to take place to-day—see 46605⁽⁵⁾ and 46542.⁽⁶⁾

L. M.

(⁵) [Sir G. Barclay's telegram (No. 596) of November 22, 1911, D. 11.10 A.M., R. 11.15 A.M., reported action on the instructions given in Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 363) of November 20 (*v. supra*, p. 832, No. 857, note (⁴)). Sir G. Barclay stated that his "message was discussed by members of the new Cabinet and by prominent deputies of the Medjliss and it is doubtless due to it that the Persian Gov[ernmen]t were able last night to announce to me what I reported in my telegram No. 594." (F.O. 371/1196. 46605/40890/11/34.)]

(⁶) [*cp.* p. 833, note (⁴).]

No. 859.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1196.

46677/40890/11/34.

(No. 299.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, November 21, 1911.

The Councillor of the Russian Embassy read to Sir A. Nicolson to-day a telegram from the Russian Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] saying that the U[nited] S[tates] Ambass[ado]r had been to see him, and had, by order of his Gov[ernmen]t, informed him that they took no interest in Mr. Shuster, that they disapproved of the whole line of conduct of that gentleman, and that they did not intend in any way to interfere in the dispute raised by his recent action in Persia. The U[nited] S[tates] Gov[ernmen]t expressed the hope that the Russian Gov[ernmen]t were satisfied with the attitude of the U[nited] S[tates] Rep[resentati]ve at Tehran.

M. Nératof thanked Mr. Rockhill for the above communication, and said that the Russian Gov[ernmen]t were quite satisfied with the attitude of the U[nited] S[tates] Rep[resentati]ve at Tehran—and that whatever occurred the Russian Gov[ernmen]t would always recollect that Mr. Shuster was a U[nited] S[tates] citizen.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

(¹) [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the Cabinet on November 23. It was repeated to Tehran (No. 141) on November 22.]

No. 860.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1196.

46682/40890/11/34.

Tel. (No. 294.)

St. Petersburg, November 22, 1911.

D. 8.25 P.M.

R. 9.30 P.M.

My telegram No. 291.⁽²⁾

I communicated to Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs this afternoon substance of Sir G. Barclay's telegram No. 594,⁽³⁾ and said that I trusted that

(¹) [This telegram was sent to Tehran (as No. 371). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

(²) [*v. supra*, pp. 832-3, No. 858.]

(³) [*cp. supra*, p. 833, No. 858, note (⁴).]

now that the Persian Government were ready to give satisfaction to Russia's two demands no difficulties would be made respecting the withdrawal of troops. His Excellency said that portion of troops had landed this morning and that rest would arrive in a day or two. This fact somewhat altered situation, and, though compliance with Russia's two demands would greatly facilitate a settlement, troops could not leave till some guarantee had been obtained that relations would be placed on a normal basis and that pending questions—such as that of Mr. Lecoffre's appointment—would be satisfactorily settled. Otherwise a new incident might arise at any moment.

I replied that this was contrary to assurances given to me by the President of the Council, and would place His Majesty's Government in an invidious position, as they would be reproached by the Persian Government with having induced them to comply with the two demands on false pretences. His Excellency asked if I was sure that Persian Government had yielded solely to our advice, and had not you told the Persian Minister that this was a question in which Russia would probably decline intervention? I said that their present conciliatory attitude was chiefly due to your influence.

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs then said that President of the Council, to whom he had spoken at the Council of Ministers held last night, adhered to assurances which he had given to me respecting the policy of the Russian Government and delay to be accorded at Kazvin, but that in giving me the specific assurance respecting the recall of the troops he had not intended to exclude discussion with the Persian Government of general settlement of pending questions. Russian Government had been put to much inconvenience and expense by the dispatch of the troops, and the question of these expenses would have to be raised. I enquired whether this meant that an indemnity would be demanded. His Excellency replied that no decision had been taken. On his observing that he had been much surprised on hearing from me what the President of the Council had said, I remarked that I also had hardly hoped to receive such satisfactory assurances, and that I had consequently induced his Excellency to repeat them a second time in the course of conversation, and that on my sounding him with regard to Shuster he had given me to understand that he had not yet *discussed* question of formulating fresh demands. It was therefore very difficult to explain retention of troops.

As the decision taken by the Council of Ministers seemed irrevocable, I pressed Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs at any rate to stop troops from advancing further. His Excellency replied that they would probably encamp for a few days at all events between Enzeli and Resht, but that conduct of military operations was entirely in the hands of the general in command. I said that he must be told that now that the Persian Government were complying with the Russian demands advance was no longer necessary. He replied that he thought that if satisfaction was given troops might for the present be retained at Resht.

Subsequently, however, he reverted to the necessity of reforming the Persian Government on the lines mentioned in my telegram No. 291,⁽⁴⁾ and of getting rid of Shuster, suggesting that we should give Russia free hand to procure dismissal of the latter. I replied that I had already told him that we would not oppose a demand for his dismissal, but that it must be accomplished by diplomatic means. He replied that it could not be done but by the occupation of Tehran, and he could not understand why we were so perturbed at the idea of such an occupation. I said that though we might believe the assurances given to us that Russia had no ulterior designs the general public would not, and the consequences might be prejudicial to our understanding.

Though I repeatedly pressed him, Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs failed entirely to reconcile what the President of the Council told me on Sunday with the decision taken yesterday by the Council of Ministers, and I can only explain it by

(4) [*v. supra*, pp. 832–3, No. 858.]

supposing that, in his desire to show his good intentions, President of the Council spoke without sufficient knowledge of the views of his colleagues, and without reflecting on the full bearing of his words. I fear that I should do no good by asking him for a personal explanation.

MINUTES.

M. Kokovtsoff has placed us in a very difficult position towards the Persian Gov[ernmen]t and towards public and parliamentary opinion here

I think we should make a further effort to induce the Russian Gov[ernmen]t to adhere to H[is] E[xc]ellency's assurances. We might point out that the Persian Gov[ernmen]t are at present in good disposition and that H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] would use all their influence with them to obtain a settlement of outstanding questions when once the troops are withdrawn whereas if they are not withdrawn H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] can do nothing since the Persian Gov[ernmen]t, having found their promises valueless once, could not be expected to trust them again. The retention of the troops would therefore make negotiation much more difficult and very likely cause them to break down altogether especially if occupation of Tehran is resorted to.

H. N.

Nov[ember] 23, 1911.

It is very disappointing. The important telegrams referring to this subject are appended.

Buchanan's interview with the President of the Council is recorded in Telegram 288.⁽⁵⁾ The underlying assumption in their assurances is that the troops are in any case to go to Kasvin apparently altho[ugh] Sir G. Buchanan puts a different interpretation on the President's remarks in his Tel[egram] 291⁽⁶⁾—namely that he had promised to accord a delay before the arrival of the troops at Kasvin.

The Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs'] assurances are more categoric see Tel[egram] 290⁽⁷⁾ and his conditions are fulfilled. I think we ought to remind him of this and inform him that the Persian G[overnment] certainly did give way on our advice and information that we had good reason to believe, after receiving his and the President of the Council's assurances, that the troops would be withdrawn on the fulfilment of the conditions and that a departure from these assurances will make a deplorable impression both here and in Persia. In these circumstances, express the earnest hope that you may announce that the troops will be at any rate stopped at Resht.

L. M.

The Sec[retary] of State will send a tel[egram] on this subject.⁽⁸⁾

A. N.

⁽⁵⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 829-30, No. 854.]

⁽⁶⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 832-3, No. 858.]

⁽⁷⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 832, No. 857.]

⁽⁸⁾ [v. immediately succeeding document.]

No. 861.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1196.

46682/40890/11/34.

Tel. (No. 712.)

Foreign Office, November 23, 1911, 5.15 P.M.

In view of your telegram No. 294⁽²⁾ and of fact that Persians have not yet complied with two demands I have given in reply to question in Parliament only a general assurance that advance of Russian troops was temporary.⁽³⁾

But it is deplorable that specific assurance given to you by President of Council should have been set aside by Council of Ministers. You should urge that when

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Tehran (No. 375).]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

⁽³⁾ [v. *Parl. Deb.*, 5th Ser., (House of Commons), Vol. 31, pp. 1353-4.]

two demands are complied with troops already in Persia should at any rate not be advanced, despatch of further troops be suspended and Russian Minister at Teheran allowed to resume diplomatic relations.

We could then discuss with Russian Gov[ernment]t what changes are necessary at Teheran to give their interests more security.

No. 862.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1196.
46819/40890/11/34.
Tel. (No. 296.)

St. Petersburg, November 23, 1911.
D. 9.6 P.M.
R. 11 P.M.

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs sent for me this evening and said that Russian Minister at Tehran had telegraphed that the Persian Government was only constituted on provisional basis; that it consisted only of four members; that only two of these had presented themselves to the Medjliss; that on pretext of arranging necessary preliminaries Persian Cossacks would not replace Treasury gendarmes for four or five days; and that he would not therefore be able to receive visit of apology from Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs till Cossacks had been installed on property. He further informed Russian Government that Shuster had had a pamphlet published dealing with recent incident that contained all the letters published in the "Times," besides other details, and that he had circulated it broadcast for the purpose of getting up an agitation against Russia.

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs said that Council of Ministers would meet at 7 to-morrow evening, and would decide to present formal demand for Shuster's dismissal on the ground both of his latest act of provocation and of those which had preceded it. They would also ask for cancelling of Lecoffre's appointment, and for a declaration from the Persian Government that in future no subject of a Great Power should be appointed to any important post in their service, and no foreigner should be so employed without consultation of the two legations. He added that he had reason to know that it was only Shuster who prevented Stokes leaving Tehran.

I said that I had already told him that we would not object to Russia formulating a demand for Shuster's dismissal, but that march of Russian troops on Tehran to accomplish it was another matter. I begged him to defer presenting this demand till I could hear from you, adding that you might perhaps be disposed to induce Persian Government to consent to his dismissal, and thus prevent recourse to force. He said that he would be very grateful if you could do so, but that instructions to Russian Minister must be sent to-morrow night, and once demand was presented, Russia would be obliged to see that it was conceded, even if she had to occupy Tehran.

His Excellency then spoke to me about the appeal addressed to us by the Bakhtiari khans (see Sir G. Barclay's telegram No. 592).⁽²⁾ He said that they were as strongly opposed to Medjliss and to Shuster as was Russia, and that if they were to make a *coup d'Etat* and get rid of Shuster it would relieve

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Tehran (as No. 376). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [Sir G. Barclay's telegram (No. 592) of November 21, 1911, D. 3 P.M., R. 6 P.M., reported a visit from two of the Bakhtiari khans who stated that a *coup d'état* was contemplated, but that they would return home "if they had guarantee of two Powers that whoever is in power at Tehran would not molest them in their territory." They asked for a pronouncement on the attitude of the British and Russian Governments. They were asked to suspend action for a few days until the two Ministers had received instructions from their governments. (F.O. 371/1196. 46540/40890/11/34.)]

Russia of a disagreeable task. He was inclined to encourage them, but on my asking whether he meant that Russia would give them material support, he said that he had not as yet considered this side of the question. At any rate, he thought that we might give them the guarantee that they asked for should they return home. He would be grateful if you would let him know your views, as in this matter he would not move except in concert with His Majesty's Government.⁽³⁾ Before leaving I repeated to his Excellency all the assurances which the President of the Council had given me last Sunday,⁽⁴⁾ and said that as you were to make statement in the House of Commons on Monday⁽⁵⁾ it might be well if he would consult his Excellency and let me know what assurances you were authorised to say had been given to His Majesty's Government with regard to presence of Russian troops in Persia, as the situation had somewhat changed during the last two days.

⁽³⁾ [*cp. infra*, p 839, No. 864.]

⁽⁴⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp. 829-30, No 854.]

⁽⁵⁾ [*v. Parl. Deb*, 5th Ser., (House of Commons), Vol. 32, pp. 91-6. The earlier part of the speech dealt with the Morocco question and is printed in *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. VII. pp. 725-35, No. 721.]

No. 863.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Bryce.

F.O. 371/1196.

47960/40890/11/84.

(No. 472.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, November 23, 1911.

Having heard of the communication which the United States Government had made in St. Petersburg as to Mr. Shuster's action in Persia,⁽¹⁾ I informed Mr. Whitelaw Reid of it to-day, and said that I would like to give him our view.

Mr. Shuster was evidently an able man. He had set about his work in Persia with great zeal, and had I believed been quite single-minded. But he had left certain considerations out of account. In the past, England and Russia had worked against each other in Persia; but a few years ago they came to an agreement: that Russia would not push her influence in the part of Persia near the Indian frontier, while England would not push hers in the north of Persia. Mr. Shuster insisted on appointing British subjects to posts in the north of Persia: a notable case being that of Major Stokes, about whom I had discovered, since the question of his appointment was first mooted, that he was notorious for his anti-Russian views.⁽²⁾ No doubt Mr. Shuster maintained that these were the best men for his purpose, and it was not for me to say that they were not. But if this plea was to be accepted, these appointments might cause British influence to displace Russian influence in the north of Persia. Under the Anglo-Russian Agreement it was impossible for us to assist any such tendency.

Originally, I had joined Russia in advocating the employment of Americans in Persia, because I was sure they would have no political axe to grind. But it had turned out that Mr. Shuster went to such an extreme of political innocence that he disregarded altogether the peculiar situation in Persia, and by not taking any political considerations into account he had become like a bull in a china shop.

Mr. Whitelaw Reid asked whether he should tell Mr. Knox confidentially what I had said.

⁽¹⁾ [*v. supra*, p 834, No. 859.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp. 766-7, No. 778, and *min.*]

I replied that I would send a record of it to you, with instructions to tell Mr. Knox our view if he asked for it; but I thought it better to say nothing to Mr. Knox unless he asked. It was not our object to make any complaint to the United States Government about Mr. Shuster, and if we sent a communication to them on the subject the impression might be given that we desired to drag them into the matter in some way. My only desire was that, if they did take any interest in the subject, and asked what our view and our version was, Mr. Whitelaw Reid or you should be in a position to give information; for the United States Government would then be satisfied that we had not been treating Mr. Shuster unfairly, and they would understand the difficulty.

[I am, &c.]
E. G[REY].

No. 864.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1196.

46819/40890/11/34.

Tel. (No. 713.)

Foreign Office, November 24, 1911, 1.15 P.M.

Your telegram No. 296.⁽²⁾

We cannot in view of renewed attack by Shuster on Russian Gov[ernmen]t raise objections to proposed Russian demands being formulated.

It is however essential that movements of Russian troops should stop after the two original demands have been complied with and time should be given to bring about acceptance of new demands by diplomatic pressure at Teheran. We cannot of course do anything there till further Russian demands have been presented. I assume that after two original demands have been complied with diplomatic relations between Russian Minister and Persian Gov[ernmen]t will be resumed so that British and Russian Ministers can act together.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Tehran (No. 377)]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, pp 837-8, No. 862.]

No. 865.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1196.

46963/40890/11/34.

Tel. (No. 600.)

Tehran, November 24, 1911.

D. 8 A.M.

R. 8 P.M.

Russo-Persian incident.

Minister for Foreign Affairs called on Russian Minister this afternoon and tendered formal apology.

Gendarmes on the principal property have been replaced by Persian Cossacks, and those on the other properties in question are to be replaced by Cossacks this evening. After receiving Minister for Foreign Affairs' apology Russian Minister announced to him that he was authorised to resume relations, but he stated his opinion that, as there had been so much delay, as troops had already landed, and as Shuster had, since the demands were presented, distributed amongst people

⁽¹⁾ [Copies of this telegram were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

translations of his recent letter to the press. Russian Government would not be entirely satisfied with the compliance with their two demands, but would present some further ones.

(Repeated to St. Petersburg.)

MINUTES

It does not seem logical or just to make the distribution by Mr. Shuster of his letter, to which the Persian Government were not a party, the occasion for making further demands while Russian troops remain in Persia: but we have done all we can.

H. N.

Nov[ember] 25, 1911.

L. M.

But Mr. Shuster is a Persian official and his last action could hardly be passed over by the Russian Government.

A. N.

E. G.

No. 866.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1196.

47066/40890/11/34.

Tel. (No. 298.)

St. Petersburg, D. November 24, 1911, 8 P.M.

R. November 25, 1911, 8 A.M.

Your telegram No. 712.⁽²⁾

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs says that he is insisting in Council of Ministers on retaining the troops at Resht, at all events for the present, but that he cannot give assurance they will not advance further, as otherwise Russia would never obtain satisfaction she demanded. No further troops will be sent. Russian Minister will be instructed to warn Minister for Foreign Affairs, when he proposes payment of visit of apology, that he has been instructed to present further demands. If in spite of that the visit is paid, Minister for Foreign Affairs presumes that diplomatic relations will be resumed. Council of Ministers has been postponed till to-morrow afternoon, and I am to see his Excellency before it meets.

I pressed him strongly to limit new demands to a strict minimum. He said that, though he could not speak with authority till after the council had decided, he thought they would be restricted to demand for Shuster's dismissal, to one respecting foreigners employed in important posts in Persian service, and to one asking for an assurance that Persian Government will undertake to settle in a conciliatory spirit all the outstanding matters in dispute.

I pointed out that as regards second of these demands you might object to our legation being referred to when it was a question of presentation of an ultimatum. He said that in that case he might find some other formula, such as the Persian Government would agree to act in conformity with representations made in autumn of 1910 by Russian Government (I presume he refers to those made by two legations—see Persian annual report of 1910 pp. 9 and 10).⁽³⁾

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Tehran (as No. 380). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 836-7, No. 861.]

⁽³⁾ [*The Annual Report for Persia for the Year 1910* (enclosure in Sir G. Barclay's despatch (No. 30), D. February 28, 1911, R. April 10, 1911) mentions the action of the Russian and British Ministers in making representations verbally and separately on August 24, 1910, "that it would be more politic and would obviate interference by the larger Powers and international jealousies if they applied for the foreign assistants they required to the Governments of the smaller Powers." *cp.* Sir Edward Grey's telegram to Mr. O'Beirne (No. 449) of August 18, 1910, D. 1.15 P.M., and Sir G. Barclay's telegram (No. 339) of August 25, 1910, D. 2.30 P.M. R. 3.40 P.M. (F.O. 371/963. 30103/29750/10/34. 31014/29750/10/34.) *The Annual Report* refers also to the later joint verbal representation of September 27. *cp. supra*, pp. 751-2, No. 758, and *note* ⁽²⁾; p. 754, No. 761, and *note* ⁽³⁾; p. 755, No. 763.]

As regards third demand, he assured me that Russian Government would not insist on immediate settlement of pending questions, and that they would not keep their troops in Persia pending such settlement if the Persian Government gave them the assurance demanded.

He spoke of the possibility of asking for recognition of Anglo-Russian agreement, but I objected that this would again involve us. He also said that desire would be expressed that a Senate should be established, but that this would constitute a wish and not a demand.

MINUTES.

The visit of apology has already been paid but we have no information as to whether the warning here referred to was given.

[H. N.]

Could we point out that it would be much better to let the internal situation develop favourably to the Bakhtiaris. If they came to power all difficulties would disappear.

We should in any case dissociate ourselves again from any intervention on such a large scale.

L. M.

I sh[oul]d think that the telegram which was sent yesterday as to our attitude towards the Bakhtiaris proposals was sufficient.⁽¹⁾

A. N.

I do not see why we should not join in demanding recognition of Anglo-Russian agreement, but this might come later when we have to intervene to support Russian demands: it might be proposed as an alternative to one or two of them.

E. G.

⁽¹⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No 378) to Sir G. Barclay of November 24, 1911, D. 1.30 P.M., stated that "we certainly cannot encourage *coup d'état*, but have no more intention of interfering with a Bakhtiaris *coup d'état* than with previous *coups d'état* in Persia. Attitude of both Powers should be one of neutrality to these internal movements so long as their interests are respected. As to guarantees to Bakhtiaris, assurance of general friendly attitude towards them as described in your telegram No. 592 should suffice." Sir G. Barclay was authorized to speak in this sense to the Bakhtiaris if the Russian Minister was similarly authorized. (F.O. 46819/40890/11/34.) For Sir G. Barclay's telegram (No. 592), *v. supra*, p. 837, No. 862, note ⁽²⁾.]

No. 867.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.

F.O. 371/1196.

46962/40890/11/34.

Tel. (No. 717.)

Foreign Office, November 24, 1911, 8 P.M.

Your tel[egram] No. 297.⁽¹⁾

Demand in question does not seem to differ much from previous practice and I see no objection to our supporting it; but Russian demands should in first instance be put forward on their own responsibility.

⁽¹⁾ [Sir G. Buchanan's telegram (No. 297) of November 24, 1911, D. 3.55 P.M., R. 3.12 P.M., stated that he had urged the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs to postpone the presentation of the Russian demands at Tehran (*cp. supra*, pp. 837-8, No. 862) until the views of His Majesty's Government had been obtained. (F.O. 371/1196. 46962/40890/11/34.)]

No. 868.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1196.

St. Petersburg, November 26, 1911.

47134/40890/11/34.

D. 8·30 P.M.

Tel. (No. 303.)

R. 10·30 P.M.

My immediately preceding telegram.⁽²⁾

In a private letter just received, Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs informs me that Council of Ministers decided yesterday to present following demands to Persian Government:—

1. Dismissal of Shuster and Lecoffre, while position of other officials of foreign nationality already appointed by Shuster must be regulated in accordance with engagement asked for in the second demand.
2. Engagement by the Persian Government not to offer any posts in its service to foreigners without having first obtained consent of the Russian and British Legations.
3. Reimbursement of expenses of military expedition.

Above is for your personal information only, and not for statement in Parliament, as demands will only be presented on Tuesday so as not to add to your difficulties in tomorrow's debate.⁽³⁾

Communication to be presented to the Persian Government by the Russian Minister will have character of an ultimatum, and a delay of only forty-eight hours will be granted. Till expiration of that delay, troops will be retained at Resht.

I am much disappointed that Persian Government are only allowed forty-eight hours for consideration, as Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs told me yesterday that he would suggest five or six days. He has apparently been overruled in Council of Ministers, where majority, who have, I fear, ear of the Emperor, are determined to settle their differences with Persia once for all.

When troops were sent to Kazvin in 1909, M. Isvolsky contended that Russia could not make herself ridiculous by perpetually sending troops to Persia and then withdrawing them, and feeling on this point is very strong here.

Kazvin was the original objective of the expedition, and I will urge that a further delay be granted on their arrival there, as the President of the Council promised when it was a question of obtaining compliance with two original demands.

MINUTES.

Forty-eight hours seems unreasonably short.

Demand 1 seems unobjectionable in principle and is really nothing but an application of the policy which the two Powers have been pursuing.

The same remark applies to demand 2.

Demand 3 is most objectionable.

We are not asked to join in making these demands, but the first two intimately concern us and indeed are practically made on our behalf as well as that of the Russians themselves. I do not see how in any case we could join in the presentation of an ultimatum to the Persian Gov[ernment], which is what is about to happen. It would be inconsistent with our attitude as laid down in tel[egram] No. 713⁽⁴⁾ to Sir G. Buchanan.

H. N.

Nov[ember] 27, 1911.

Is there any use in appealing for a longer delay?

L. M.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Tehran (as No. 384). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. infra*, pp. 853-5, No. 876, and *encl.*, and *note* ⁽³⁾.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. Parl Deb.*, 5th Ser., (House of Commons), Vol. 32, pp. 43-165.]

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 839, No. 864.]

No. 869.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1196.
 47464/40890/11/34.
 Tel. (No. 305.)

St. Petersburg, November 27, 1911.

D. 8.26 P.M.

R. 9 P.M.

My telegram No. 303.⁽²⁾

On my expressing regret that only forty-eight hours had been granted to Persian Government to reply to ultimatum, and on my urging that further delay should be accorded on arrival of troops at Kazvin, Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs said that Council of Ministers had decided that this second ultimatum must be couched in more severe terms than the first. As, moreover, ultimatum would only be delivered to-morrow, and as Persian Government must be aware from language held to them by Russian Minister that Shuster's dismissal would be demanded, they would really have had some five days to think over the matter. Russian demands, he considered, were very moderate, and had been restricted to such as had to do with the causes and origin of incident. Second part of first demand was aimed at new Americans whose appointment had been sanctioned by the Medjliss; but Russian Minister at Tehran would decide as to whether any action would be taken with regard to those who already held appointments in Persia.

I expressed hope that no fresh demands would be presented even if Russian troops had to march on Tehran; and his Excellency gave me to understand that an increase in the indemnity would be all that would be asked for.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Tehran (as No. 385). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

No. 870.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.

F.O. 371/1196.
 47668/40890/11/34.
 (No. 147.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, November 27, 1911.

The Persian Min[ister] called at this Office on the 27th ult[imo]⁽¹⁾ and asked Sir A. Nicolson whether H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] were aware if Russia intended to present further demands now that the Persian Gov[ernmen]t had conceded the two original ones. As Sir A. Nicolson thought it undesirable to anticipate what Russia would ask, he was exceedingly reserved, and said that he believed that the Russian Council of Ministers was discussing the situation, and that no doubt we should hear very shortly what line they proposed to adopt. He added that, speaking quite confidentially, he thought it most unfortunate that at this moment Mr. Shuster had thought fit to circulate in Persia translations of his indictment against Russia.⁽²⁾ Mr. Shuster, Sir A. Nicolson remarked, was a high Persian official and his recent act could not but be displeasing to Russia and would perhaps be interpreted by her as provocative.

Mehdi Khan agreed, and said that the Persian Gov[ernmen]t were anxious to be guided by the advice of H[is] M[ajesty's] Gov[ernmen]t. Sir A. Nicolson remarked to him that, as I had told him, it was difficult for H[is] M[ajesty's]

⁽¹⁾ [Sic. Sir A. Nicolson's record on which the despatch is based shows that the interview took place on November 27.]

⁽²⁾ [cp. *supra*, p. 815, No. 830, note ⁽⁵⁾; pp. 837-8, No. 862; pp. 839-40, No. 865.]

G[overnment] to intervene between Russia and Persia. Mehdi Khan replied that perhaps I would consent to instruct you to confer with the Persian M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs]. Sir A. Nicolson promised to consult me on this point.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

No. 871.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1196.

47911/40890/11/34.

(No. 313.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, November 28, 1911.

I spoke to the Russian Ambassador to-day⁽²⁾ very seriously about the prospect in Persia.

I explained that the dispute between Russia and Persia did not concern us directly: but that the consequences of the Russian action might be very serious. I said that, whether the things in Mr. Shuster's pamphlet were right or wrong, the situation certainly became intolerable when the official of one Government distributed attacks upon another Government; but this would hardly justify a precipitate occupation of Tehran. I then used all the arguments contained in my telegram No. 737 to you to-day,⁽³⁾ and added what I had already told you of my apprehensions as to the Anglo-Russian Agreement.

The Russian Ambassador said that Russian opinion was very much stirred, and felt that there must be an outright settlement with Persia; but he did not deprecate any of the suggestions which I made.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the Cabinet. A copy was sent to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [cp. *Siebert-Benckendorff*, II, pp. 236-7.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. infra*, pp. 845-6, No. 874]

No. 872.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1196.

47464/40890/11/34A.

Tel. (No. 728.)

Foreign Office, November 28, 1911, 1 P.M.

Your telegram No. 305.⁽²⁾ (Nov[ember] 27.)

Persian Minister here has asked our advice and requested that British Minister at Teheran should be instructed to confer with M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs].⁽³⁾

I am ready to use what influence I can to induce Persian Gov[ernment] to comply with Russian demands if they are as stated in your telegram No. 303 (Nov[ember] 26),⁽⁴⁾ but it is essential that more time should be given. I have in reply to criticism here of Russian action as being harsh and unfair to Persia stated

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Tehran (No. 388)]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 843, No. 869.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 843-4, No. 870.]

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 842, No. 868.]

the Russian case, but there is a strong and natural feeling that failure to prevent return of Ex-Shah and inherent weakness of Persian Gov[ernmen]t afford a valid plea for some consideration.

I cannot see, now that two original demands have been complied with, that there is any urgency to justify an advance to Teheran, or indeed an advance beyond Resht where troops now are. Russian Gov[ernmen]t gave reasonable expectation that troops would be withdrawn when two original demands complied with. To disappoint this expectation and follow it up with renewed ultimatum with short time limit does not seem to be justified by anything that has happened.

You should urge strongly that Russian demands should be put forward without time limit simply as condition of withdrawal of troops: that Russia should then if there is delay in complying come to an agreement with us as to what changes are required at Teheran to secure her interests: my public statements here have shown how clearly we feel that those interests must not be prejudiced.

You should represent all this in strongest manner both to President of Council and Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs].

No. 873.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1196.

47769/40890/11/34.

Tel. (No. 736.)

Foreign Office, November 29, 1911, 7.30 A.M.

Persian Minister has again asked advice and I have told him that I can say nothing definite till I know exactly how Russian demands are formulated and can say for certain that compliance will secure withdrawal of Russian troops. I have, however, told him definitely that Shuster makes things impossible.

It is obvious that Persia cannot pay an indemnity and I assume Russian troops will not remain till actual payment has been made if everything else is settled. To exact indemnity before Persia has obtained a loan would be fatal to any prospect of improvement of southern roads, and would thereby further intensify damage to British trade.

It is important that I should know text of Russian demands and whether it can be said definitely that compliance will secure withdrawal of troops.

Persian Minister represents to me that he desires advice as to how new Persian Cabinet must act generally to secure friendly relations with Russia, and Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] may be able to say something on this point also. Impression made on me by Persian Minister is that Persian Gov[ernmen]t realize how serious situation is: he admits unwisdom of Shuster in distributing pamphlet.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Tehran (No. 389).]

No. 874.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1196.

47770/40890/11/34.

Tel. (No. 737.)

Foreign Office, November 29, 1911, 7.30 A.M.

I have told Russian Ambassador substance of my immediately preceding telegram to you of to-day.⁽²⁾ I said also that if Russia pressed things too hard I might have to say here that we were obliged to discuss with Russia how far principle of Anglo-Russian Agreement was impaired by consequences of Russian action: this

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Tehran (No. 390).]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

would give impression that Anglo-Russian understanding was shaky, and would thereby have an effect on foreign policy altogether which would be most unfortunate.

It is perhaps well for you not to go so far in conversation with Russian Gov[ernmen]t, but to let it come from Russian Ambassador here.

No. 875.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1197.

48347/40890/11/34.

(No. 349.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, D. November 29, 1911.

R. December 4, 1911.

In the conversation which I had with the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs immediately after my return to my post, on which I reported in my telegram No. 286, Confidential, of the 15th instant,⁽²⁾ I spoke to His Excellency very seriously of the consequences which might result from a Russian occupation of Tehran. The Anglo-Russian understanding which was based on the principle of Persian integrity and independence, might receive a severe shock, while Moslem sentiment in India would be prejudicially affected. I urged him therefore, not to issue orders for an advance from Kasvin till all other means of exercising pressure on the Persian Government, such as the seizure of Customs-Houses, had been exhausted, and until sufficient time had elapsed to allow the occupation of Kasvin to produce its effect. I further reminded him how, in your desire to maintain the Anglo-Russian understanding intact, you had always tried to meet Russia's wishes and how you had repeatedly defended her action when it was criticized in Parliament. There was however an English public opinion of which you had to take account; and as, in spite of the provocation which Russia might have received, the fact remained that the Persian Cossacks had endeavoured to prevent the seizure of a property belonging to one of the leaders of the late insurrection, it would not be easy for you to justify an armed occupation of the capital on account of this incident.

In the course of his reply, Monsieur Nératow gave me the positive assurance that the principle on which the Anglo-Russian understanding was founded would be maintained intact and that nothing which the Russian Government might do would strike at the integrity of Persia. He dismissed however the idea of exercising pressure by the seizure of Customs Houses as being quite inadequate and declined to grant the Persian Government any further delay after the arrival of the troops at Kasvin. He based this refusal on the grounds that the Russian Minister at Tehran had broken off diplomatic relations with the Persian Government and that Russia could not without loss of prestige address any further communication to that Government. He rejected a proposal which I had made that he should send a last warning message through the Persian Chargé d'Affaires here, but raised no objection when I put forward the personal suggestion that Sir George Barclay might perhaps warn the Persian Government that we had been told that unless satisfaction was at once given to Russia, not only would Tehran be occupied but that Russia's demands would, as His Excellency had already informed me, be increased the further she advanced into the country.

In referring to the incident to which the seizure of Shoa-es-Sultaneh's property had given rise,⁽³⁾ Monsieur Nératow said that the Russian Government had never disputed the right of the Persian Government to confiscate the property of persons who had taken part in the late rebellion. They had acquiesced in principle in such a procedure but in this particular case the Persian Government had failed to notify the Russian Legation that it was Shoa-es-Sultaneh's property that was about to be

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the Cabinet; and as having been seen at Berlin. A copy was sent to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [*v supra*, pp. 827-9, No. 853. The date of the telegram was November 18.]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. supra*, r 817, No. 834, and note ⁽²⁾.]

seized, while the gendarmerie sent to take possession of it had carried off various implements belonging to the Russian farmers who had leased the property. This incident however was but one of a series of provocative measures that had been inspired by Mr. Shuster; and it was the cumulative effect of these acts that had forced the Russian Government to take action. His Excellency's language clearly showed that Russia is bent on bringing about the fall of Mr. Shuster and that if the Mejliss refuses to consent to his dismissal she will endeavour to get rid of the present Chamber by having the date of the new elections anticipated. I told him that if the occupation of Tehran by Russian troops were to lead to the departure of the Regent and the overturn of the present régime, there was one thing to which His Majesty's Government would never agree, namely—the return of the Ex-Shah. His Excellency replied that he did not believe that the Regent would go and that His Highness could count on Russia's support. The measures that she was taking were of a purely provisional character and their sole object was to secure the redress of her grievances; and on my enquiring what satisfaction the Persian Government could give to induce her to withdraw her troops, Monsieur Nératow replied that she would recall them as soon as she was notified of Mr. Shuster's dismissal, and that were he to go, she would even abandon her demand with regard to the replacing of the Treasury Gendarmes by Persian Cossacks on Shoa-es-Sultaneh's property.

In the course of our conversation I observed that the loyal manner in which Monsieur Poklewski had always worked in concert with Sir G. Barclay had afforded His Majesty's Government great satisfaction but that it would be deplorable were the action of subaltern officials like Monsieur Pokhitonoff, who might not be so friendly disposed towards us, to compromise the existence of the Anglo-Russian Understanding by the creation of incidents with a view to forcing the hand of their Government. Monsieur Nératow replied that there was no danger of this and that Monsieur Pokhitonoff had found himself placed in a position in which he was bound to act. His Excellency admitted however, that he might have proceeded in a more judicious manner and told me in confidence that the subaltern official, whom he had sent to Shoa-es-Sultaneh's house, would shortly be recalled for having exceeded his instructions. Monsieur Nératow added with a smile that Major Stokes, who was still living with Mr. Shuster, was also a subordinate official.⁽⁴⁾

Two days after my interview with Monsieur Nératow I called on the President of the Council and delivered to him the messages with which the King and you had charged me.⁽⁵⁾

I told Monsieur Kokovtsoff that the King had sent for me on the eve of his departure for India and had commanded me to say that there was nothing which he had so much at heart as the maintenance of a close understanding with Russia and that His Majesty was confident that His Excellency would prove as true a friend to England as was the late Monsieur Stolypine, whose death His Majesty so greatly deplored. His Majesty, I said, counted on His Excellency to do all that was possible to maintain an understanding which, while offering a precious guarantee for the preservation of peace, could not fail to promote the best interests of the two countries. His Majesty was aware that between two great Empires, whose interests extended over the whole world, it was inevitable that differences should from time to time arise, but He cherished the hope that, when that happened, the two Governments would always approach the questions at issue in a conciliatory spirit, and thus avoid any possible misunderstanding. I also conveyed to Monsieur Kokovtsoff friendly messages from yourself assuring him that you associated yourself in all that the King had commanded me to say; that you had learnt with much pleasure of his appointment to the Presidency of the Council, knowing the great services that he had already rendered his country; and that His Excellency could always count on you as a sincere friend of Russia to collaborate with him for the cultivation of the best possible relations between the two countries.

(4) [Unsigned marginal note: "He is not a British official in Persia."]

(5) [*v. supra*, pp. 829-30, No. 854.]

Monsieur Kokovtsoff expressed his grateful thanks for these messages which he would at once communicate to the Emperor who warmly desired a good understanding with England. His Excellency then proceeded to take a retrospective survey of Anglo-Russian relations. The foundation of our present understanding had, he said, been laid by Lord Hardinge when he was Ambassador at St. Petersburg, and the work of bringing about a serious rapprochement between the two countries had been taken up by Sir A. Nicolson. He was himself at that time Minister of Finance and as such had co-operated with Monsieur Isvolsky for the establishment of the Anglo-Russian understanding. Now that he had been entrusted by the Emperor with the onerous duties of President of the Council he would devote all his efforts to maintain it. He deeply felt the responsibility that rested on him of having to steer the ship of state in these troublous times; but if the future should prove that his strength was not equal to the task, he could at any rate assure me that he was inspired by the very best intentions.

I said that, in my opinion, the surest way of avoiding any possible misunderstandings was for us always to be perfectly frank with each other and, on His Excellency cordially assenting, I proceeded to speak of the present situation in Persia, using much the same language as that which I had employed in my conversation with Monsieur Nératow. I explained to His Excellency the serious preoccupation which it was causing you, pointing out that it would not be easy for you to justify in Parliament an occupation of Tehran by Russian troops on account of the incident connected with the seizure of Shoa-es-Sultaneh's property.

Monsieur Kokovtsoff replied that the apprehensions entertained in England were greatly exaggerated. He had, he said, studied the Persian question for some time past and he was entirely opposed to the idea of adding to the already vast territories comprised in the Russian Empire. He would give me his word of honour that the Imperial Government did not contemplate the annexation of a single Persian province and that they would not violate the principle of Persian integrity which formed the basis of our understanding. They were not, he said, going to follow the example set by Italy in Tripoli. They were not moreover having any dealings with the Ex-Shah; and His Excellency cited cases to show how they had on more than one occasion during the past few months turned a deaf ear to the appeals which had been made to them on His Majesty's behalf. The dispatch of Russian troops to Persia covered no aggressive design. They had been sent there to vindicate Russia's honour and dignity, which had been outraged by a series of provocative acts culminating in the seizure of a property that had been mortgaged to the Banque d'Escompte as security for a debt contracted by Shoa-es-Sultaneh. The Russian Government had had no choice but to act as they had done, more especially as public opinion in Russia had been greatly roused by these various incidents. Russia would recall her troops as soon as the Persian Government had complied with her two demands, namely—a formal apology to be made by the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs to the Russian Minister and the Treasury Gendarmes to be replaced by Persian Cossacks on Shoa-es-Sultaneh's property. The above explanation with regard to the dispatch of Russian troops was given by His Excellency on my enquiry what statement you might make on the subject in the House of Commons. In order that I might correctly report what he had said I induced His Excellency later on in our conversation to repeat the last sentence a second time; and on neither occasion did he attempt to qualify in any way his categorical assurance respecting the conditions on which the troops would be recalled. When I pressed him to grant a further delay to the Persian Government after the troops had reached Kasvin His Excellency finally consented and did not hint that the Russian demands would be increased if a satisfactory answer had not been received from the Persian Government before the troops had arrived at that place. On the contrary when I told him that we had no intention of taking Mr. Shuster's part and that we should not oppose any demand which Russia might formulate for his dismissal, as the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs had given me to understand was possible, Monsieur Kokovtsoff

merely said that he had not yet discussed with Monsieur Nératow the question of any ulterior demands.

On my informing Monsieur Nératow next day of the assurances which Monsieur Kokovtsoff had given me, His Excellency did not seem quite pleased and said that he personally thought that unless the Russian demands were conceded by the time that the Russian troops had reached Persian territory something more would have to be asked for; and this something he trusted would be a demand for Mr. Shuster's dismissal.

On the receipt of your telegram No. 704 of the 20th instant⁽⁶⁾ I again called on Monsieur Nératow and communicated to him what you had said to the Persian Minister, adding that the latter had given you the impression that a settlement could be effected and that you were ready if the Imperial Government desired it to communicate their views formally to the Persian Government.⁽⁷⁾

Monsieur Nératow said that the Persian Minister's communication was very important as showing the disposition of his Government, and desired me to thank you for your offer to act as intermediary. If the Russian troops had not disembarked before satisfaction had been given to Russia's two demands it might be possible, he thought, to give the Persian Government the assurance which they had asked for; but this was a question on which he would have to consult the President of the Council. It would nevertheless be to the interests of both our Governments were the present incident to be used for the purpose of establishing a normal state of affairs at Tehran. The Constitution was at present being worked in a one-sided manner and the Mejliss had arrogated to itself executive powers to which it had no right. It was necessary in his opinion to restrict the rôle of that Chamber to that of a purely legislative Assembly, to constitute a Senate and to increase the powers of the Regent. It would moreover be most desirable to procure the dismissal of Mr. Shuster as, so long as he remained at Tehran, pending questions, like that of the appointment of Mr. Lecoffre, would never be settled, while even were that appointment now to be cancelled there was no guarantee that similar ones would not be made in the future.

I replied that if the Russian troops were to be retained in Persia till this programme had been carried through they would have to remain there for months; that the President of the Council had attached no conditions to the assurances which he had given me with regard to their recall, beyond compliance with the two demands already presented; and that His Excellency had not qualified those assurances by stating that the two demands must be complied with before the troops touched Persian territory. As this was a matter to which you attached great importance, I trusted that the Russian Government would adhere strictly to what Monsieur Kokovtsoff had said. I further suggested that, when Monsieur Poklewski received the visit of apology from the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs, he might state that the troops had been recalled in the hope that the Persian Government would now come to an arrangement with them for the settlement of all outstanding questions and for placing relations on a friendly and stable basis. I added that in such a case I was sure that you would give him all the support you could.

Monsieur Nératow replied that he was as anxious as you were for the recall of the troops; but that when once this step was taken there would be no guarantee against the recurrence of other incidents entailing the dispatch of further troops.

On the following day Monsieur Nératow informed me⁽⁸⁾ that he had communicated to the President of the Council all that I had told him, but that, as a portion of the troops had already arrived at Enzeli, it had been decided at a Cabinet Council held on the preceding evening that it was impossible to recall them till some guarantee had been obtained with regard to the future. I said that this decision was in direct contradiction to what the President of the Council had told me; that it would place

⁽⁶⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 831, No. 856.]

⁽⁷⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 832-3, No. 858.]

⁽⁸⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 834-6, No. 860.]

His Majesty's Government in a very invidious position; that the Persian Government would reproach them with having induced them to comply with the two Russian demands under false pretences; and that under these circumstances it would be very difficult for you to justify the retention of the troops. Monsieur Nératow then tried to explain that Monsieur Kokovtsoff, in giving me the specific assurance respecting the recall of the troops, had not intended to exclude a discussion with the Persian Government for the purpose of arriving at a settlement of all outstanding questions. His Excellency however entirely failed to reconcile the language held to me by Monsieur Kokovtsoff on Sunday with the decision arrived at at yesterday's Cabinet Council; and I can only explain it by the supposition that, in his desire to show his good intentions, Monsieur Kokovtsoff spoke without taking sufficient account of the views held by the majority of his colleagues (who might, if not listened to, have laid the matter before the Emperor), and without sufficiently reflecting on the full bearing of his words. I subsequently pressed Monsieur Nératow at any rate to prevent the troops advancing beyond Resht; but though he gave me a vague and conditional assurance on the subject, it was clear from his subsequent language that the Russian Government are determined not to withdraw their troops till they have got rid of Mr. Shuster, even if they must send their troops to Tehran to expel him.

On the evening of the next day—the 23rd instant—Monsieur Nératow sent for me⁽⁹⁾ and told me that according to a telegram which he had received from Monsieur Poklewski, the new Persian Government consisted of only three Ministers and had only a provisional mandate; that the Persian Cossacks were not to replace the Treasury Gendarmes for another four or five days and that until this change had been effected, Monsieur Poklewski could not receive the visit of apology that the Minister for Foreign Affairs was to pay him. Finally Mr. Shuster had, His Excellency said, caused a Persian pamphlet dealing with the recent incident to be circulated broadcast, for the purpose of stirring up an anti-Russian agitation. This was a proceeding which the Russian Government could not tolerate; and instructions would be sent to Monsieur Poklewski, after a Council of Ministers to be held the next evening, to demand his dismissal. Such a demand when once presented must, His Excellency added, be enforced at all costs. Monsieur Poklewski would also be instructed to demand the cancelling of Mr. Lecoffre's appointment, as well as a declaration to the effect that in future no subject of any of the Great Powers would be appointed to any important post in the Persian Service, and that no foreigner of any nationality would be employed in such a capacity without previous consultation with the two Legations.

I endeavoured, though unsuccessfully, to induce His Excellency to delay the dispatch of these instructions till I was in receipt of your views with regard to them.⁽¹⁰⁾

Monsieur Nératow subsequently said that he would be grateful if you would let him know what you thought of the appeal which had been addressed to the two Governments by the Bakhtiari Khans, as this was a matter in which he could not move save in concert with His Majesty's Government. We could, he thought, at any rate give them the guarantee they asked for should they return to their homes; and he personally was inclined to encourage them to carry out the proposed *coup d'état*. It would relieve the Russian Government of the necessity of taking measures to oust Mr. Shuster, as the Bakhtiari were as strongly opposed to Mr. Shuster and to the Mejliss as was the Imperial Government. On my enquiring whether in saying this His Excellency contemplated giving the Bakhtiari any material support, Monsieur Nératow said that he had not yet considered this side of the question.

After receiving your telegram No. 712 of the 23rd instant I again pressed Monsieur Nératow to stop the further advance of the troops,⁽¹¹⁾ explaining at the same time the nature of the statement which you had made on the preceding evening in

⁽⁹⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 837-8, No. 862.]

⁽¹⁰⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 841, No. 867, *note* (1).]

⁽¹¹⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 836-7, No. 861; pp. 840-1, No. 866.]

Parliament and giving him to understand that you had been greatly disappointed to hear that the troops were not to be withdrawn immediately on the Persian Government complying with the two demands. I further expressed the hope that the Imperial Government would do nothing to add to the difficulties with which you would be confronted when Foreign Affairs came up for discussion in the House of Commons next Monday.⁽¹²⁾

Monsieur Nératow said that he was insisting in the Council of Ministers that for the present at any rate the troops should be retained at Resht; but that he could not give me an assurance that they would not advance beyond it as, were he to do so, the Persian Government would never yield. As regarded the question of the resumption of diplomatic relations, Monsieur Poklewski would be instructed to warn the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs, when he announced his intention of paying a visit of apology, that further demands were about to be presented and that, if in spite of this warning the apologies were presented, His Excellency supposed that diplomatic relations would be resumed.

Monsieur Nératow then said that as the meeting of the Council of Ministers had been postponed for twenty-four hours he could not give me an authoritative statement with regard to the new demands, of which he had spoken to me yesterday. They would, however, he thought, deal with the question of Mr. Shuster's dismissal, the employment of Foreigners in important posts in the Persian Administration and the settlement of all outstanding litigious matters in a conciliatory spirit. The question of M. Lecoffre's appointment was a matter of secondary importance; but it might be well to take this opportunity of obtaining the recognition of the Anglo-Russian Agreement; while a proposal which would be more in the nature of a wish than of a demand would be put forward for the constitution of a Senate.

I pressed His Excellency strongly to limit the number of these demands to the strictest minimum and remarked that I did not know how far you would approve of the mention of our Legation in the matter of the employment of Foreigners, when the demand about to be presented was virtually an ultimatum that might have to be imposed by force. I added that in my opinion the same objection held good with regard to a demand for the recognition of the Anglo-Russian understanding. His Excellency admitted that this might be awkward for us and said that he would try to find a formula that would show that Russia was acting entirely on her own responsibility. In reply to some objections which I had raised His Excellency gave me the assurance that he would not insist on the immediate settlement of all pending questions; that the troops would not remain in Persia till such a settlement had been effected; and that the Russian Government would be content with a declaration in the sense that those questions would be settled in a conciliatory spirit.

On the receipt of your telegrams Nos. 713⁽¹³⁾ and 717⁽¹⁴⁾ of the 24th instant I again pressed on Monsieur Nératow the importance of retaining the troops at Resht, now that the two original demands had been complied with and that the resumption of diplomatic relations would enable our two Representatives to act together.⁽¹⁵⁾ I did not conceal from him the disappointment which the decision taken by the Russian Government not to withdraw their troops had caused you and urged him to drop the demand for an indemnity of R.150,000, of which he had just spoken to me. I also told him that any demand that the Russian Government might present respecting foreign employés must be made in the first instance on their own responsibility.

Monsieur Nératow said that he proposed suggesting that a delay of five or six days should be accorded the Persian Government; but that, as regarded the question of an indemnity, he considered that its payment would exercise a salutary effect and render the Persians less disposed to provoke armed intervention in the future.

⁽¹²⁾ [For this debate *v. Parl. Deb., 5th Ser., (House of Commons), Vol 32, pp. 43-165.*]

⁽¹³⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 839, No. 864.]

⁽¹⁴⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 841, No. 867.]

⁽¹⁵⁾ [*cp. infra*, pp. 853-5, No. 876, and *encl.*, and *note* (3).]

On the next day—Sunday—Monsieur Nératow informed me⁽¹⁶⁾ of the decision arrived at by the Council of Ministers respecting the new demands to be presented at Tehran in a private letter, of which the following is an extract:—

“Elles sont au nombre de trois:—

1. “la démission de Mr. Morgan Shuster et Lecoffre; quant aux autres fonctionnaires étrangers nommés par Mr. Shuster, leur situation doit être réglée d’après le point ci-après, sub No. 2;

2. “engagement du Gouvernement Persan de n’inviter à l’avance des étrangers à son service qu’avec le consentement préalable des Légations de Russie et de la Grande Bretagne à Téhéran;

3. “remboursement par le Gouvernement Persan des frais de l’expédition militaire qui vient d’être envoyée en Perse.

“Pour ne pas rendre inutilement difficile la position de Sir Edward Grey au Parlement, nous avons résolu de ne pas rendre cette décision publique avant mardi et ce n’est qu’à la date de ce jour que Monsieur Poklewsky fera connaître nos exigences au Gouvernement Persan. La communication de notre Ministre aura le caractère d’un ultimatum, dont les conditions seront exécutoires dans un terme de 48 heures, jusqu’à l’expiration duquel nos troupes seront retenues à Recht.”

In a conversation which I had with the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs on the following day, I told His Excellency that I was much disappointed at the shortness of the time allowed the Persian Government for returning an answer to this ultimatum and urged that in accordance with the assurance given me by the President of the Council, a further delay would be accorded on the arrival of the troops at Kasvin.⁽¹⁷⁾

His Excellency replied that the Council of Ministers had decided that, in order to satisfy public opinion in Russia, it was necessary that this second ultimatum should be couched in much sharper language than the first. The ultimatum moreover was not to be presented till the 28th instant and, as the Persian Government must have been aware from the language held to the Minister for Foreign Affairs by Monsieur Poklewski on the 24th instant, that Mr. Shuster’s dismissal would be insisted on, they would have had sufficient time for reflection. The new demands were, His Excellency contended, most moderate and had been purposely restricted to matters connected with the incident that had provoked the presentation of an ultimatum. In reply to an enquiry which I had addressed to him respecting the second half of the first demand, His Excellency explained that it was intended more especially to apply to the 10 new Americans whose appointment had already been sanctioned by the Mejliss, but that it would be left to Monsieur Poklewski to decide whether any action should be taken with regard to any other foreigners holding appointments in the Persian Service. He also said that, should the Russian demands not have been accepted before the troops reached Kasvin, he thought that they would probably make a few days’ halt in that town before advancing on Tehran.

I expressed the hope that, even should they have to occupy the capital, the Russian demands would not be further increased, and His Excellency gave me to understand that in that case all that would be asked for would be a larger indemnity.

I omitted to mention that Monsieur Nératow informed me on the 25th instant that Monsieur Poklewski would be instructed to consult with Sir George Barclay and to join him in the reply which you propose to return to the appeal addressed to the two Governments by the Bakhtiari Khans.

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

⁽¹⁶⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 842, No. 868.]

⁽¹⁷⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 843, No. 869.]

No. 876.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1197.

48348/40890/11/34.

(No. 350.)

St. Petersburg, D. November 29, 1911.

Sir,

R. December 4, 1911.

With reference to my immediately preceding despatch⁽²⁾ of to-day's date, I have the honour to transmit to you the accompanying memorandum, which Monsieur Nératow handed to me on the 25th instant, for the purpose of furnishing you with material for replying to any interpellations that may be addressed to you in Parliament with regard to the dispatch of Russian troops to Persia.⁽³⁾

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

Enclosure in No. 876.

Memorandum communicated to Sir G. Buchanan by M. Neratov on November 25, 1911.

Le conflit actuel entre la Russie et la Perse dont la cause immédiate a été l'incident survenu pendant la confiscation des biens du Prince Schoa-es-Sultaneh, doit être envisagé comme la suite d'une série d'événements qui ont provoqué le mécontentement bien fondé de la Russie et qui avaient pour cause principale l'attitude irréconciliable envers elle du parti radical persan, ainsi que les procédés arbitraires de Mr. Morgan Shuster. Ce dernier dès son arrivée en Perse s'est toujours refusé à prendre en considération les légitimes réclamations de la Russie au sujet des nombreux intérêts qu'elle possède dans ce pays. En effet, la tentative de Mr. Shuster de s'ingérer dans la compétence des administrateurs belges des douanes persanes, en violation du contrat passé entre la Banque Russe et le Gouvernement Persan,—son refus opiniâtre de renoncer à employer Mr. Stokes dans l'administration de la gendarmerie financière, la nomination de Mr. Lecoffre, &c., fournissent une preuve suffisante de l'attitude hostile prise par cet étranger à l'égard de la Russie. Enfin, le dernier incident au cours duquel les ordres donnés par Mr. Shuster à ses gendarmes avaient eu un caractère visiblement provocateur envers le Consulat Général de Russie, ont épuisé la patience du Gouvernement Russe, qui s'est justement vu outragé par ces procédés et s'est trouvé forcé d'abord de demander une réparation et ensuite, lorsque cette dernière ne lui a pas été donnée, d'avoir recours à des moyens de rigueur.

Tout dernièrement encore Mr. Shuster a commis un acte inadmissible de la part d'un fonctionnaire au service de l'État en publiant dans le "Times" sa lettre contenant des accusations arbitraires contre la Russie et l'Angleterre et surtout en distribuant en Perse une traduction persane de cette lettre, augmentée de nouveaux détails, dans le but manifeste d'exciter le peuple persan contre la Russie.

Le but que se propose le Gouvernement Russe est d'établir des relations normales et stables avec le Gouvernement Persan et d'écarter les éléments de discorde qui nuisent au développement des rapports amicaux des deux pays. C'est à ces fins que la Russie compte formuler certaines nouvelles demandes.

Dans son action entreprise en ce moment en Perse le Gouvernement Russe ne poursuit que la défense de ses intérêts légitimes dans ce pays, dans la zone qui lui

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the Cabinet on December 7; and as having been seen at Berlin. A copy was sent to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

⁽³⁾ [A summary of this despatch and its enclosure was sent by Sir G. Buchanan in his telegram (No. 302) of November 26, D. 4 P.M., R. 5.45 P.M. (F.O. 371/1196. 47133/40890/11/34.)]

est réservée en vertu de la Convention de 1907 ; son activité n'est nullement en contradiction avec les dispositions de cette Convention, puisqu'il ne poursuit aucun but pouvant porter atteinte à l'intégrité ou à l'indépendance de la Perse. Il tient en outre à constater d'une façon catégorique que les mesures militaires prises par lui sur le territoire persan n'ont qu'un caractère purement provisoire et qu'il n'a aucunement l'intention d'enfreindre les principes qui régissent l'accord existant entre la Russie et l'Angleterre relativement à la Perse.

Résumé de causes qui ont provoqué les premières exigences de la Russie.

Laissant de côté la question de la confiscation des biens du Prince Schoa-es-Sultaneh, contre laquelle les Représentants Russes à Téhéran n'ont jamais protesté en principe, il faut noter que le mécontentement du Gouvernement Impérial a été provoqué d'abord par la manière de laquelle cette mesure a été mise à exécution par la gendarmerie financière persane agissant conformément aux ordres de son Chef le Conseiller Financier Morgan Shuster et ensuite par la démarche du Gouvernement Persan tendant à approuver la façon d'agir de ses employés et à rejeter la responsabilité sur les fonctionnaires russes.

Il appartient évidemment au Gouvernement Impérial seul de juger des procédés de ses agents sur les lieux, et après un examen attentif le Gouvernement Impérial est arrivé à la conclusion que ces procédés ont été conformes aux droits du Gouvernement Russe et aux usages locaux. D'autre part, le Cabinet de St.-Petersbourg a constaté que l'attitude du Conseiller Financier et de ses agents dans la présente affaire était visiblement hostile et outrageant à l'égard des employés russes. A ce propos on peut appuyer surtout sur les faits suivants :

- (1) La réoccupation par force de la maison du Prince effectuée avant la fin des pourparlers entre le Consul-Général de Russie et les agents de Mr. Shuster.
- (2) L'envoi dans ce but d'une force de plus d'une centaine de gendarmes, comme si Mr. Shuster prévoyait la possibilité d'une collision entre cette force et l'escorte du Consul-Général ;
- (3) le point culminant de l'affaire—le fait que les gendarmes persans se sont permis de viser de leurs fusils les employés du Consulat-Général avec l'intention manifeste de tirer sur eux.
- (4) L'envoi par le Gouvernement Persan, contrairement à toute tradition, de deux notes consécutives exigeant le rappel du Consul-Général Russe et d'un de ses subordonnés, malgré la réponse donnée verbalement par Monsieur Poklewsky à la première note qu'il considérait cette demande comme non-avenue.
- (5) Cette affaire doit être mise en rapport avec les procédés antérieurs de Mr. Morgan Shuster qui bien des fois déjà avaient suscité le mécontentement du Gouvernement Russe ;
- (6) l'effet défavorable à Téhéran même pour le prestige des autorités russes qui s'est produit à la suite de la manière d'agir outrageante des autorités persanes et dont la colonie russe à Téhéran se ressent.

Les raisons pour lesquelles le Gouvernement russe trouve nécessaire de poser au Gouvernement Persan de nouvelles exigences :—

(1) Le Gouvernement Persan n'a pas donné dans un délai raisonnable une réponse à la note contenant les premières exigences, ce qui a forcé le Gouvernement Russe d'envoyer des troupes en Perse.

(2) L'explication que la réponse à cette note n'avait pu être donnée vu l'absence d'un Cabinet ne saurait être acceptée, étant donné que l'ancien Ministère n'avait démissionné que quelques jours après la présentation de la note et que sa démission

elle-même témoignait à nos yeux de l'intention de se soustraire à la nécessité de satisfaire aux exigences russes.

(3) Le point principal. La lettre adressée par Mr. Morgan Shuster au "Times" contenant des assertions fausses et des accusations arbitraires contre la Russie et surtout la distribution par lui à la population indigène d'une traduction persane de cette lettre augmentée de nouveaux détails, dont le but manifeste est d'exciter le peuple persan contre la Russie.

(4) Le Gouvernement Russe, désireux d'établir des relations normales et stables avec le Gouvernement Persan, juge nécessaire d'obtenir de ce dernier des garanties réelles de ce que les éléments de discorde qui nuisent au développement des rapports amicaux entre les deux pays seront écartés.

No. 877.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1196.

47949/40890/11/84.

Tel. (No. 392.)

Foreign Office, November 30, 1911.

I have told Persian Minister that we are discussing situation with Russian Gov[ernmen]t, but there can be no question of Russia withdrawing the three demands: that if these are complied with at once details may be arranged favourably afterwards, but that delay in complying will inevitably mean advance of Russian troops.

You may inform your Russian colleague and Persian M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs].

(1) [This telegram was repeated to St. Petersburg (No 744) Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

No. 878.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1196.

47893/40890/11/84A.

Tel. (No. 745.)

Foreign Office, November 30, 1911, 10 P.M.

You may inform Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] of my telegram No. 392 to Sir G. Barclay.⁽²⁾

I have made a statement today in Parliament⁽³⁾ admitting that situation is serious and must be discussed with Russian Gov[ernmen]t. After Persian Gov[ernmen]t submit to these demands it will be essential that Russian Gov[ernmen]t should co-operate in facilitating appointment of such foreign advisers as are necessary and in enabling Persian Gov[ernmen]t to obtain a loan.

Confidential.

Persia can never pay indemnity and later on it would be well if that condition were waived in return for some other concession such as recognition of Anglo-Russian Agreement, or favourable settlement of some pending Russian question, but it is premature to raise this point yet.

(1) [This telegram was repeated to Tehran (No. 393).]

(2) [v. immediately preceding document.]

(3) [v. *Parl. Deb*, 5th Ser., (House of Commons), Vol. 32, pp. 561-2.]

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1197.

48349/40890/11/84.

(No. 351.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, D. November 30, 1911.

R. December 4, 1911.

In continuation of my Despatch No. 349 of the 29th instant,⁽²⁾ I have the honour to report that I called yesterday afternoon on the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs. His Excellency greeted me by expressing the great satisfaction which your speech in the House of Commons had caused him,⁽³⁾ adding that he had instructed Count Benckendorff to convey to you his thanks and acknowledgments. I replied that I regretted to say that I had been charged by you to deliver a message of a very different character. The expectations which you had founded on the assurances which had been given us by the Russian Government had been disappointed and now a second ultimatum had been presented to the Persian Government, that required an answer within 48 hours, without anything having happened in the meanwhile to justify such a drastic mode of procedure. I repeated to him what I had said in previous conversations with regard to the shortness of the time limit and urged on His Excellency the importance of allowing you sufficient time to use your influence with the Persian Government in order to arrive at a peaceful settlement of this incident. An occupation of Tehran by Russian troops would, I said, be interpreted in England as an infraction of the Anglo-Russian Understanding and would tend to estrange English public opinion; and an understanding that could not count on the support of public opinion was worthless. In order moreover, that he might realise how strongly you felt on the subject I read to him, in French translation, your telegrams Nos. 728 of the 28th⁽⁴⁾ and 736 of the 29th instant.⁽⁵⁾

Monsieur Nératow, in the course of a long conversation once more explained the reasons which had forced the Russian Government to give a more peremptory character to this second ultimatum. The ultimatum had, he believed, been presented that morning; but, as he had not yet received confirmation of this from Monsieur Poklewski, he could not give me its actual text. The three points however recorded in my telegram No. 303 of the 26th⁽⁶⁾ instant, exactly reproduced the instructions sent to Tehran, though a few words had been added to the effect that the amount of the indemnity and the mode of its payment would be settled when the three demands had been complied with and the actual cost of the expedition established. The Russian Government would not press for an immediate payment nor would they, he believed, increase their demands. He declined to accede to my request to do away with the time limit altogether or even to extend it and would not give me an assurance that the troops should make a halt of a week or ten days at Kasvin. On my urging that such an extension might be granted, were the Persian Government to inform Monsieur Poklewski of their readiness to take the three demands into consideration, if only the Russian Government would allow them more time for their examination, Monsieur Nératow declared that this was impossible. Eventually however, he said that, if the Persian Government would give a definite assurance in writing that they would comply with the three demands, he would allow them another fifteen days to arrange the various details connected with Mr. Shuster's dismissal, such as the question of the indemnity to be paid him &c. He also promised to wait till Saturday before sending telegraphic instructions for an advance of the troops from Resht to Kasvin.

(1) [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the Cabinet on December 8; and as having been seen at Berlin. A copy was sent to the Director of Military Operations.]

(2) [*v. supra*, pp. 846-52, No. 875.]

(3) [*v. Parl. Deb.*, 5th Ser., (House of Commons), Vol. 32, pp. 43-165.]

(4) [*v. supra*, pp. 844-5, No. 872.]

(5) [*v. supra*, p. 845, No. 873.]

(6) [*v. supra*, p. 842, No. 868.]

His Excellency at my request, then telephoned to the President of the Council, who replied that he would receive me at once.

I repeated to Monsieur Kokovtsoff what I had said to Monsieur Nératow, using almost precisely similar language and, urging him in the interest of the Anglo-Russian Understanding to meet your wishes in a more generous spirit, as I considered that the assurances which I had received from Monsieur Nératow did not go nearly far enough.

His Excellency said that His Majesty's Government could naturally take a calmer view of the incidents which had recently occurred in Persia, as they had not been directly touched by them. This was not the case with Russia. Her dignity had been offended; and he could tell me that the Emperor felt this very deeply. The only way to make the Persians understand that Russia would not be trifled with was to present an ultimatum, requiring an immediate answer and holding out no hope of a possible compromise. The Russian Government had gained nothing by adopting a less drastic form in presenting their two original demands, but had had to wait for an answer till their troops had arrived at Resht. On my remarking that the satisfaction which they had now received with regard to the first incident, ought to make them adopt a more lenient attitude as regarded the second, Monsieur Kokovtsoff said that at the Council of Ministers, at which the second ultimatum had been drafted, he had reduced the demands to be presented, to a minimum, though some of his colleagues had advocated adding considerably to their number. He could assure me that Russia had no desire to occupy Tehran and, if you could induce the Persian Government to yield and thus save her the necessity of ordering the troops to advance, he would be most grateful. He understood from all that I had told him that it was not the demands themselves to which you took exception, but the form in which they had been presented and the manner in which they were to be imposed on the Persian Government. It might give rise to a possible misunderstanding, were he to give me any definite assurances with regard to the various points touched on in your telegrams, without first consulting his colleagues, and he would, therefore, ask me to send him copies of those telegrams. He would then submit them to a Council of Ministers to be held on the following afternoon and let me know their decision through Monsieur Nératow.

In the course of our conversation Monsieur Kokovtsoff gave me the positive assurance that the Russian troops would be withdrawn as soon as the three demands had been complied with, even were compliance to be delayed till Tehran had been occupied. As regarded the indemnity, he said that he was not going to play the part of a Shylock and insist on having so many pounds of flesh before recalling the troops. A few hundred thousands of roubles were nothing to him; but public opinion in Russia demanded that, if Persia wantonly provoked military intervention, she should pay for the cost of the expedition. He would be satisfied with a definite assurance from the Persian Government that the indemnity would be paid and would not be too hard on them with regard to the term in which payment must be made. Though His Excellency received my remarks with regard to an extension of the time limit and a halt of a week or ten days at Kasvin, in a more conciliatory spirit than Monsieur Nératow, he declined to pledge himself in any way.

I have this morning forwarded to Monsieur Kokovtsoff paraphrases in French of your two telegrams above referred to and have, in the covering private letter, expressed the hope that he will use his powerful influence to induce the Council of Ministers to decide this question in a manner conformable to your wishes.

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

No. 880.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1196.
47990/40890/11/34.
Tel. (No. 313.)

St. Petersburg, December 1, 1911.
D. 1.26 A.M.
R. 8 A.M.

I have just received from M. Klemm following message from Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] who is still at the Council of Ministers.

Russian Minister at Teheran has been informed that Persian reply will be considered satisfactory if within 48 hours Persian Gov[ernment] state in writing that the three demands are formally accepted and that dismissal of Shuster and Lecoffre is an accomplished fact. Since however formalities connected with Shuster's dismissal may require some time, Russian Minister is authorised to allow Persian Gov[ernment] delay which he judges necessary for complete regulation of position of that official. As to cost of expedition it will be sufficient that Persian Gov[ernment] should now agree to settle that matter when amount shall have been fixed.

If a satisfactory answer is received, detachment will not advance beyond Resht, but its recall to Russia can only take place when Shuster affair is completely settled.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Tehran (as No 397). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

No. 881.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1197.
47991/40890/11/34.
Tel. (No. 314.)

St. Petersburg, December 1, 1911.
D. 1.26 A.M.
R. 8 A.M.

My immediately preceding tel[egram].⁽²⁾

As Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] could not receive me I wrote privately pointing out that letter sent to me made no mention of further delay at Kasvin or of President of the Council's assurance respecting recall of troops.

Following is his answer:

"As regards halt of troops at Kasvin, it was decided that it would be necessary to order troops to rest there for a few days without fixing exactly length of their stay.

We have I think time enough before us to discuss this question should it arise.

As regards question of recall of our troops, it is difficult for me to give you categorical answer as all will depend on circumstances under which march into the interior will take place. At present moment it is not our intention to formulate other demands beyond those already known, but if we are obliged to employ force in order to carry on business, our demands may be increased."

From the above it appears that the President of the Council has again gone further in the assurances given to me than his colleagues are prepared to go and I think that I had better in future deal with the Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] alone who is far more careful in what he says. Not only is the President of the Council not sufficiently posted in all that is going on but he is opposed, if I am correctly informed, by two reactionaries in the Council of Ministers who are working with parties at Court to bring about his fall.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Tehran (as No. 398). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

I will ask Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] tomorrow about terms of Russian note mentioned in Sir G. Barclay's tel[egram] No. 613;⁽³⁾ but according to assurances given to me by Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] and Sir G. Barclay's tel[egram] No. 316 [*sic*: 616],⁽¹⁾ Russian troops will be recalled when Shuster and Lecoq have been actually dismissed and when engagement to comply with other demands included in the ultimatum has been given. If the Persian Gov[ernment] do not send a satisfactory answer at once I very much fear that they will have to pay for it later on.

(3) [Sir G. Barclay's telegram (No. 613) of November 30, 1911, D. 12.45 P.M., R. 2.40 P.M., gave details of the Russian note to Persia, presented at noon on November 29. It is not reproduced, as the substance of the note is given accurately in Sir G. Buchanan's telegram (No. 303) of November 26, 1911. *cf. supra*, p. 842, No. 868. Explanations were added to the note stating the Russian desire "to lay foundations upon which the two Governments can build up friendly and stable relations and to give a prompt and satisfactory solution to all Russian matters and pending questions." It was stated further that the Russian Government would order the troops to advance, if a satisfactory answer were not given within forty-eight hours. (F.O. 371/1196. 47947/40890/11/34.)]

(1) [Sir G. Barclay's telegram (No. 616) of November 30, 1911, D. 1.45 P.M., R. 2.30 P.M., stated that the Russian Government would withdraw their troops when certain of the conditions had been complied with. (F.O. 371/1196. 47949/40890/11/34.)]

No. 882.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1197.
48129/40890/13/34.
Tel. (No. 316.)

St. Petersburg, December 1, 1911.
D. 8.32 P.M.
R. 10.30 P.M.

On my acting on your telegram No. 745,⁽²⁾ Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs said that it was the intention of the Russian Government to do all they could to facilitate the appointment of fresh foreign advisers and negotiate loan. He also gave me satisfactory explanations as regards points in Russian note referred to in Sir G. Barclay's No. 614⁽³⁾ that had caused anxiety to the Persian Government.

His Excellency then told me that Russian Minister at Tehran had been officially informed of the refusal of Medjliss to comply with Russian demands. He regretted this, as he had expected that, though they were not likely to accept them, they would have contented themselves with leaving them without a reply, thus not shutting the door on all further conversation.

In conformity with the promise (?he had) given to me, order to march would not be sent until tomorrow afternoon, and, on arrival at Kazvin, troops would halt for a few days. After the categorical refusal just given, there was no prospect of compliance on the part of Persian Government so long as Medjliss remained in session, and the only hope was that they might be sent about their business. He was not sure whether the Regent was empowered by the constitution to take action of this kind. It was possible, however, that the Bakhtiari might make a *coup d'État*. Sardar Assad had arrived at Baku, and, on arriving in Persia, would be allowed to pass unmolested through the Russian lines.

I pressed once more on His Excellency complications to which march on Tehran might lead, pointing out that it would probably give rise to fresh incidents, and that these in turn would occasion fresh demands. There would be no regular

(1) [This telegram was sent to Tehran (as No. 402). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

(2) [*cf. supra*, p. 855, No. 878.]

(3) [Sir G. Barclay's telegram (No. 614) of November 30, 1911, D. 1.30 P.M., R. 2.15 P.M., reported a message from the Persian Government indicating that the real fear was lest the Russian "explanations" (*cf.* immediately preceding document, note (2)) should give Russia opportunity to make further claims and even try to force the acceptance of a particular form of Government agreeable to herself. (F.O. 371/1196. 47948/40890/11/34.)]

Government with whom Russians could treat, and the ex-Shah might try to profit by the confusion to re-establish himself on the throne, and to this His Majesty's Government would under no circumstances consent.

His Excellency assured me that Russia would give no support whatever to His Majesty, and, on my referring to probability of our having to find a new Regent, he suggested Sardar Assad.⁽⁴⁾ I said that I could not say how his candidature would be viewed by you.

Before leaving I begged His Excellency to have some regard for the difficult position in which we should now be placed. He replied that Russian Government were being attacked in the press for not showing sufficient firmness, and that they must uphold Russian prestige. If they had, however, to put forward further demands, they would restrict them to what was absolutely necessary for this purpose.

I fear that, unless something unexpected happens at Tehran by the time troops reach Kazvin, occupation of Tehran is inevitable.

(4) [A note by Lord Onslow attached to this document states that "Sirdar Assad . . . is the most influential of the Bakhtiari Khans and a man of considerable education who has lived a good deal in Europe" He had held various posts under the Persian Government.]

No. 883.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1196.

47990/40890/11/34.

Tel. (No. 748.)

Foreign Office, December 1, 1911.

I much regret that Russian Gov[ernmen]t have not given a longer delay to Persian Gov[ernmen]t. But failing this instructions sent to Russian Minister at Teheran seem satisfactory.⁽²⁾

Russian Minister will I conclude inform Persian Gov[ernmen]t.

You should enquire whether I can state purport of instructions here. It is most important that I should be able to state definitely in Parliament what action of Russian Gov[ernmen]t is and on what conditions troops will be withdrawn. Great and very natural anxiety prevails as to whether Russian action may not lead to break down of Anglo-Russian agreement and very definite assurances as to its object and limits of Russian action are required to allay this. You should ask for them in writing.

(1) [This telegram was repeated to Tehran]

(2) [v. *supra*, p 858, No 880]

No. 884.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1197.

48250/40890/11/34.

Tel. (No. 404.)

Foreign Office, December 2, 1911, 5.30 P.M.

Your tel[egram] No. 623.⁽²⁾

We would not in any circumstances recognize the ex-Shah again after his past conduct. You will of course avoid any intrigue with Bakhtiari: we cannot incur any responsibility for what they may do.

(1) [This telegram was repeated to St. Petersburg (No. 755).]

(2) [Sir G. Barclay's telegram (No. 623) of December 2, 1911, D. 12.0 noon, R. 12.30 P.M., stated that one branch of the Bakhtiari would not oppose the ex-Shah, and that the murder of Ala-ed-Dowleh was due to a suspicion that he was intriguing between the Russians and the Bakhtiari. It was repeated to St. Petersburg. (F.O. 371/1197. 48250/40890/11/34.)]

No. 885.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1197.

48129/40890/11/34.

Tel. (No. 756.)

*Foreign Office, December 2, 1911, 6.40 P.M.*Your telegram No. 316.⁽²⁾

I approve what you said about Ex-Shah and am glad that Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] responded. It is very important that Russians should not occupy Teheran except in last resort and should not put forward new demands of a more far-reaching nature. If they find new demands necessary I hope they will consult us first. I am afraid of new demands being put forward that I could not defend as being consistent with Anglo-Russian Agreement or inevitable. In that case whole question of Foreign policy of both Gov[ernmen]ts would become involved. I doubt whether Russian Gov[ernmen]t realize how easily Persian question having become so acute might affect the much larger question. It would be most deplorable if Russian Gov[ernmen]t without realizing the risk forced the larger question upon us by making co-operation in Persia impossible.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Tehran (as No 405). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 859-60, No. 882.]

No. 886.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1197.

48267/40890/11/34.

Tel. (No. 317.)

St. Petersburg, December 2, 1911.

D. 8.30 P.M.

R. 9.45 P.M.

Your telegram No. 748.⁽²⁾

As regards your proposed declaration in Parliament,⁽³⁾ I submitted to Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs today *aide-mémoire* and private letters received from him, and enquired what portions of these you might use.

Of the *aide-mémoire*, of which summary was given in my telegram No. 302,⁽⁴⁾ second and third paragraphs may be quoted, commencing "Russia having now" down to "governing the Anglo-Russian understanding." Copy of this *aide-mémoire* will reach you on Monday by messenger.⁽⁵⁾

You may also use contents of private letters recorded in my telegrams Nos. 313⁽⁶⁾ and 314.⁽⁷⁾ First, however, has now lost interest owing to negative reply sent to [*sic*: by] Persian Government. As regards second, Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs said that he could not now give definite assurance of a halt at Kazvin, though commander of troops had been instructed not to advance beyond that town without instructions

⁽¹⁾ [Copies of this telegram were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 860, No. 883.]

⁽³⁾ [*cp.* Sir Edward Grey's speech of December 14, *Parl. Deb.*, 5th Ser., (House of Commons), Vol. 32, pp. 2598-2608.]

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 853-5, No. 876, and *encl.*, and *note* (3).]

⁽⁵⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 853-5, No. 876, *encl.*]

⁽⁶⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 858, No. 880.]

⁽⁷⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 858-9, No. 881.]

from him or Russian Minister at Tehran. Latter, however, might, in view of disturbances, request immediate advance of troops for the protection of legation.

I asked whether there was anything else which he could add to the above assurances, and he approved following, which I wrote down and showed to him:—

“Should circumstances arise to render necessary presentation of further demands, those demands will not go beyond questions having a peculiar interest for Russia, such as settlement of outstanding matters in dispute or other matters having an exclusive interest for Russia in zone that has been reserved to her, and will not touch questions of a general political interest.”

In view of the fact that I have in my possession *aide-mémoire* and two private letters, I hardly liked to ask for further written assurance.

From what he told me I gather that, should new demands be made, they may include one for pre-emption in the matter of railways in Russian sphere or one for the formation of police force under Russian control in return for withdrawal of troops from Tabreez.

No. 887.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1197.

48522/40890/11/34.

(No. 315.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, December 2, 1911.

I spoke very seriously to Count Benckendorff to-day as to my anxiety about Persia.⁽²⁾

I said it was unfortunate, in the first instance, that the Russian ultimatum had been based upon the question of the property of the Shua-es-Sultaneh⁽³⁾: for the question was of comparatively slight importance, and the Russian case with regard to it did not seem to be very strong. It was still more unfortunate that, after we had been given to understand—and, indeed, had once received a most positive assurance from M. Kokovtsoff—that the Russian troops would be withdrawn when the two demands in connection with the property were complied with, and Sir George Barclay had urged the Persian Government to comply, in this expectation, the troops had not been withdrawn, and further demands had been put forward. It was true that there had been a delay of a few days in complying with the demands, but nevertheless the circumstances in which the Russian action was taken were not fortunate.

Three demands had now been put forward. With regard to the first two, as to Mr. Shuster and the future appointment of foreign advisers, I could not object. Mr. Shuster had rejected the advice which we had given him through our Minister in Tehran; he had placed us in a most embarrassing position; and some arrangement with the Persian Government respecting foreign advisers was necessary, even from the British point of view, to prevent our being placed in such a position again. It would have been better, I thought, if the Persian Government had been asked to promise not to appoint foreign advisers without consultation with the Russian and British Legations instead of being bound to obtain consent: but this was rather a matter of form.

I regretted that an indemnity had been asked for. British trade had suffered

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet.]

⁽²⁾ [This report was translated and sent by Count Benckendorff to St. Petersburg Siebert, pp. 129-31]

⁽³⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 817, No. 834, and note (2).]

much more than Russian trade: in fact, Russian trade in the north might even have gained by the stoppage of British trade in the south. Money was essential for the restoration of order in the south, and the Russian demand for an indemnity would be felt here as injurious to the prospect of the restoration of order in the south, that was necessary for British trade. As the demand had been put forward, the Persian Government must say yes to it; but I trusted that payment would either not be pressed for, or in some way be commuted for some other advantage later on.

I then urged strongly upon the Ambassador that the Russian troops should not go to Tehran, except in the very last resort; and that no further demands of a more far-reaching nature should be put forward by the Russian Government without consultation with us. I was afraid that the Government in St. Petersburg did not realise how suddenly the Persian question, if it was mismanaged, might raise the whole question of foreign policy. If further demands were to be put forward, with regard to which we might be obliged to say that they were not justified, or inconsistent with the Anglo-Russian Agreement, the Persian question would disappear, and the much more serious question of foreign policy, both for us and for Russia, would take its place. This would be most deplorable, and I was very anxious.

On the other hand, if the Russian Government would restrict themselves to their existing demands, and would not go to Tehran except in the last resort, I thought that we might get through the present difficulties. We might secure a Persian Government who would realise that they must govern with a good disposition towards Russian interests, instead of in opposition to them. We should be able to assist such a Government with foreign advisers, and facilitate such a loan as Messrs. Seligmann's or another on favourable terms. Things in Persia might then become better than they had yet been.

But, at present, we were passing through a very delicate and difficult time; and I was afraid that the Government in St. Petersburg did not realise what great issues were at stake, and what great care was needed to prevent our drifting apart.

[I am, &c.
E. GREY].

No. 888.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1193.
48279/27357/11/34.
Tel. (No. 639.)

Tehran, December 3, 1911.
D. 5.10 P.M.
R. 7 P.M.

St. Petersburg telegram No. 316,⁽²⁾ last but three and ante-penultimate paragraphs.

Our agent at Astrabad is constantly sending reports of acts on behalf of ex-Shah by the Russian consul at Asterabad and the Russian-Turkoman commissioner at Gombad Kabus. A selection of these allegations went by bag last week in my despatch No. 225.⁽³⁾

It is impossible to verify accuracy of these stories—agent is a Persian—and I presume that it would be difficult to use them at St. Petersburg without substantiation.

⁽¹⁾ [Copies of this telegram were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 859-60, No. 882.]

⁽³⁾ [Sir G. Barclay's despatch (No. 225), D November 22, 1911, R. December 18, 1911, enclosed an extract from the *Astrabad News*, describing the conduct of Russian officials. (F.O. 371/1193 50533/27357/11/34.)]

I have brought the more plausible stories—notably that of the dispatch to the ex-Shah, by a gholam of the Russian consulate, of 4,000 tomans collected for His Majesty by Turkomans in Asterabad—to the notice of my Russian colleague, but after the manner in which his insubordinate consul-general at Tehran has recently been upheld, he cannot be expected to have proper authority over his consuls.

Our agent now reports that among other things the Russian consul had an interview with the ex-Shah on Sunday.

(Repeated to St. Petersburg.)

No. 889.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1197.
48280/40890/11/34.
Tel. (No. 640.)

Tehran, December 3, 1911.
D. 5.10 P.M.
R. 7 P.M.

Your telegram No. 404.⁽²⁾

I venture to suggest that, from Tehran standpoint, it would be desirable that a public statement should be made in the sense of your first sentence. It would tend to calm public opinion here and to stop further assassinations of reactionaries.

I have no reason to think that Russian Minister is acting contrary to the spirit of our joint action as regards Bakhtiari (see my telegram No. 607⁽³⁾), though he would certainly welcome a home-made *coup d'État* as a means of saving Russia from dilemma which seems to face her of stalemate, or of having to make a *coup d'État* herself, which latter must, it would seem, inevitably lead to something in the nature of a protectorate.

I have so far seen no reason to change view expressed in my telegram No. 580.⁽⁴⁾
(Sent to St. Petersburg.)

MINUTES.

Such a statement might also have a good effect on such opinion here as concerns itself with Persian affairs.

H. N.
Dec[ember] 4, 1911.

We might ask the Russian G[overnmen]t to agree to a statement on behalf of both Gov[ernmen]ts.

L. M.

⁽¹⁾ [Copies of this telegram were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 860, No. 884.]

⁽³⁾ [Sir G. Barclay's telegram (No. 607) of November 28, 1911, D. 10.30 A.M., R. 5.30 P.M., stated that the British and Russian representatives at Tehran had made a joint communication to the Bakhtiari Khans in the sense authorized by Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 378) of November 24. *v. supra*, pp. 840-1, No. 866, note ⁽⁴⁾. (F.O. 371/1196. 47676/40890/11/34.)]

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 825-6, No. 850.]

No. 890.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1198.

50545/40890/11/34.

(No. 237.)

Tehran, D. December 3, 1911.

Sir,

R. December 18, 1911.

In continuation of my despatch No. 234 of the 1st instant⁽²⁾ I have the honour to transmit a translation of the reply of the Persian Government to the Russian ultimatum as well as a brief report on the debate on the ultimatum which took place on the morning of the 1st instant⁽³⁾ notwithstanding that that day was a Friday when all public business is generally at a standstill and which resulted in the almost unanimous vote to reject the Russian demands.

The message contained in your telegram No. 392⁽⁴⁾ of the 30th ultimo was conveyed to the Minister for Foreign Affairs at 10 A.M. in the Majliss during the debate on the ultimatum. It will be observed that he informed the Majliss of its nature.

The Persian Government have now formally rejected the Russian demands. These demands are in my opinion most ill-advised. I cannot but feel that unless Russia is playing for a protectorate she has blundered badly for, unless the Majliss is removed by a *coup d'état* there is, so far as I can see, no chance of the Persian Government's complying. Russia cannot now draw back or submit to the stale mate involved by the retention of her troops at Kazvin while the Majliss remains obdurate, and I fear that unless there is some Persian *coup d'état* she will be compelled to advance her troops to Tehran and turn out the Majliss herself. Even should the unexpected happen and the Majliss yield, I fear that Mr. Shuster's dismissal would be followed by even worse chaos in the administration than existed before his able hands took over the task of reform.

It is, in my opinion, most unfortunate that the Russian Government should have formulated these far-reaching demands. Had Mr. Poklewski been given an opportunity in concert with me of giving his advice, they would at least, have gone more slowly, in which case it is not impossible that Mr. Poklewski and I could have come to a *modus vivendi* with Mr. Shuster. Mr. Shuster's continuance here is of such immense importance if Persia is ever to emerge regenerate as an independent country, that it would at any rate have been worth while to make a comprehensive attempt to come to terms with them.

It may be asked why Mr. Shuster is so indispensable and why some other man would not serve the purpose. My answer is that for any foreigner to be able to effect any comprehensive and real reform he must, unless a régime such as that in Egypt were set up, have the support of the Majliss. Without it he would have no chance of dealing with the thieving and corruption universal in official Persia. Mr. Shuster has the support of the Majliss as no nominee of the two Powers, even were the Majliss willing to accept one, could possibly have it. Such nominee would have to rely entirely on backing from the two Legations, and that, unless it were reinforced in the material backing that the British advisers in Egypt enjoy, would leave him, even if on paper he were given executive powers, in little better position than Monsieur Bizot who failed to secure the support of the Majliss and to effect anything because he was regarded as the tool of the two Powers.

I have, &c.

G. BARCLAY.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the Cabinet on December 22. A copy was sent to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [Sir G. Barclay's despatch (No. 234), D. December 1, R. December 18, 1911, enclosed a translation of the Russian note to Persia of November 29. *cp. supra*, p. 842, No. 868; p. 859, No. 881, *note* ⁽³⁾. (F.O. 371/1198. 50542/40890/11/34.)]

⁽³⁾ [Not reproduced.]

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 855, No. 877.]

No. 891.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1197.

48280/40890/11/34.

Tel. (No. 765.)

Foreign Office, December 4, 1911, 3.5 P.M.

I think it essential to state here that we cannot again recognize the ex-Shah, whatever other changes may take place at Teheran as result of pending events. After what Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] has said I do not think this can embarrass Russian Gov[ernmen]t but you should inform him and ask if I may add that we are in agreement with Russian Gov[ernmen]t on this point. Such a statement would have a favourable effect.

(1) [This telegram was repeated to Tehran (No. 409).]

No. 892.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Barclay.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1197.

48280/40890/11/34.

Tel. (No. 408.)

Foreign Office, December 4, 1911, 3.10 P.M.

Your telegram No. 640,⁽²⁾ second paragraph.

Our attitude on this point must be one of non-intervention. Now that Persian Gov[ernmen]t have refused Russian demands we cannot have responsibility for what may occur, and must let things take their course.

I see no insuperable objection to our recognizing any Persian solution, except that of restoration of ex-Shah, and there is no *prima facie* objection on our part to Baktiari solution.

(1) [This telegram was repeated to St. Petersburg (No. 764).]

(2) [*v. supra*, p. 864, No. 889.]

No. 893.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1197.

48599/40890/11/34A.

Tel. (No. 319.)

*St. Petersburg, D. December 4, 1911, 8.40 P.M.**R. December 5, 1911, 8 A.M.*

Sir G. Barclay's tel[egrams] Nos. 639⁽²⁾ and 640.⁽³⁾

The fact that Russian agents are intriguing with the ex-Shah does not necessarily implicate Russian Gov[ernmen]t but I think that it would be well that I should inform Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] that these reports have reached us and should warn him of serious consequences that a return of ex-Shah would entail, as in such a case it would be impossible for us to recognise him and the two Gov[ernmen]ts might then find themselves in a position of direct opposition to each other.

(1) [This telegram was sent to Tehran (as No. 416). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

(2) [*v. supra*, pp. 863-4, No. 888.]

(3) [*v. supra*, p. 864, No. 889.]

I believe that Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] has acted in perfectly good faith in assuring me that the Russian Gov[ernment] would not support ex-Shah should he attempt to return. Before however you decide to make public statement suggested by Sir G. Barclay I would venture to submit the following considerations to you.

Supposing that Bakhtiari were to return to their homes and stand entirely aloof, ex-Shah might at any moment appear at the head of a force of Turcomans and re-establish himself on the throne or he might even do so with the help of the Bakhtiari. Were we then to remind Russia of her assurances, she might reply that she had faithfully observed them by abstaining from giving H[is] M[ajesty] any support, but that to expel him would be to depart from policy of non-intervention which the two Gov[ernments] had always observed with regard to such internal conflicts. Public statement in Parliament would prevent our ever re-considering our present decision not to recognise him even should his recognition be the only means of averting still greater evils.

On the other hand proposed public statement might have the effect of impeding or even averting H[is] M[ajesty]'s return; though if it is known that Russia is not a party to such a statement, ex-Shah is hardly likely to be deterred from making his attempt. It is therefore a question whether it would not be better to confine ourselves to repeating in as serious a form as possible warning I have already addressed to Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] instead of burning our boats altogether by a public statement.

Only other course open to us is to invite Russia to join us in declaring that neither Gov[ernment] will consent to His Majesty's return. I cannot say how she would receive such a request but we could point out to her that such a declaration on her part would go a long way to abate opposition which her present action has evoked in England and preserve Anglo-Russian co-operation in Persia. It would naturally be impossible for Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] to take decision on such a question without consulting Council of Ministers and the Emperor and, should you think such a step worth trying, I had perhaps better first sound H[is] E[xc]cellency privately.

No. 894.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 871/1197.

49018/40890/11/34.

(No. 355.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, D. December 4, 1911.

R. December 7, 1911.

With reference to my despatch No. 351 of November 30th,⁽²⁾ I have the honour to report that I received at seven o'clock on the evening of the 30th ultimo a letter from Monsieur Klemm,⁽³⁾ the Head of the Persian Department in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, of which a copy is enclosed, stating that Monsieur Nératow, who had not yet returned from the Council of Ministers had requested him to inform me of the instructions that were being sent to the Russian Minister at Teheran. Monsieur Poklewsky, he stated, was to insist on compliance with the Russian demands within forty-eight hours, but was at the same time authorised to allow the Persian Government whatever delay he might deem necessary to regulate the position of Mr. Shuster, though the Russian troops would not be recalled till Mr. Shuster's dismissal was an accomplished fact. As regarded the question of the indemnity, he was to state that it would be sufficient were the Persian Government to agree to settle the matter when the amount had been fixed.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the Cabinet. A copy was sent to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 856-7, No. 879.]

⁽³⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 858, No. 880.]

As it was too late for Monsieur Nératow to receive me I wrote privately to His Excellency,⁽⁴⁾ pointing out that the above-mentioned letter did not touch the question as to how long the troops were to be halted at Kasvin and said nothing about the assurance which the President of the Council had given me, that the troops would be recalled, even had they already arrived at Teheran, when once the demands were accepted, and without any fresh ones being put forward. In his reply, of which I have the honour to enclose a copy, Monsieur Nératow stated that the troops would in any case rest a few days at Kasvin, and that though it was not at present the intention of the Russian Government to put forward any further demands, he could not give me a categorical assurance on the subject, as all would depend on the circumstances under which the march into the interior would take place.

I saw Monsieur Nératow on the following day⁽⁵⁾ and received from him the assurance that the Russian Government would, in conformity with the wish which you had expressed, do all they could to facilitate the appointment of new foreign advisers. His Excellency then proceeded to inform me that the Mejliss had categorically refused to comply with Russia's demands. He had hardly expected that they would accept them straight away, but he had hoped that they would have contented themselves with leaving them without an answer, instead of shutting the door on all further conversation. The order for an advance from Resht would not, as he had promised me, be dispatched till the following afternoon, and a halt of a few days would be made at Kasvin. There was, however, now no prospect of a compliance on the part of the Persian Government unless the Mejliss could be sent about their business. He was not sure whether the Constitution conferred on the Regent the power to dissolve them; but His Highness was hardly the man to take action of this kind. Sardar Assad had, however, arrived at Baku and orders had been sent to allow him to continue his journey to Teheran unmolested. It was, therefore, just possible that the Bakhtiari might decide to make a *coup d'état*.

In the conversation which ensued I once more endeavoured to impress on His Excellency that the occupation of Teheran would inevitably cause serious complications and give rise to fresh incidents, which would in their turn occasion the presentation of fresh demands. The Russians would on their arrival there find no regular Government with which to treat, while the ex-Shah would probably try to profit by the confusion to re-establish himself on the Throne. To this, as I had once before told His Excellency, His Majesty's Government would under no circumstances consent. It would however, I supposed, be necessary to find someone to exercise the functions of Regent.

His Excellency assured me that the Imperial Government would give the ex-Shah no support whatsoever, and suggested the name of Sardar Assad as a possible Regent.⁽⁶⁾ I replied that I could not say what view you would take of such an appointment.

I subsequently reminded him of the difficult position in which His Majesty's Government would be placed were Russia to press matters too far, and begged him to take that position into account. Monsieur Nératow replied that Russia's prestige must be upheld. The Government, he added, were being constantly attacked in the press for not showing sufficient firmness in dealing with the situation, but they would confine their action to what was absolutely necessary to accomplish the object which he had just mentioned.

I called again on Monsieur Nératow on the 2nd instant and spoke to him in the terms of your telegram No. 748 of the 1st instant.⁽⁷⁾ As I was afraid that in view of the refusal of the Russian demands he might not be prepared to give such categorical assurances with regard to Russia's intentions as he had given before the receipt of the Persian reply, I enquired whether you might use for a statement in Parliament

(4) [*v. supra*, pp. 858-9, No. 881.]

(5) [*v. supra*, pp. 859-60, No. 882.]

(6) [*cp. supra*, p. 860, No. 882, and *note* (4).]

(7) [*v. supra*, p. 860, No. 883; pp. 861-2, No. 886.]

the two letters which I had received from him and Monsieur Klemm on the 30th of last month, as well as the *aide-mémoire* of which a copy was forwarded to you in my despatch No. 350 of the 29th November.^(*) I drew His Excellency's special attention to the third and fourth paragraphs of the last-mentioned document, in which the most categorical assurances are given that the Imperial Government do not propose to violate the integrity or independence of Persia; that the military measures which they are taking are of a purely provisional character; and that they have no intention of infringing the principles which govern the Anglo-Russian Agreement with regard to Persia.

After perusing the several documents, Monsieur Nératow said that you were at liberty to use them. He pointed out, however, that the instructions to Monsieur Poklewski which formed the subject of M. Klemm's letter had ceased to have any practical interest now that the Russian demands had been rejected, and that as regarded the halt of the troops at Kasvin, which was referred to in the letter which he had written to me, he could tell me that the Commander of the troops had been ordered not to advance beyond that town without further instructions from St. Petersburg or from the Russian Legation at Tehran. He could not, however, guarantee that the troops would stop at Kasvin, as should disorders break out at Teheran it might be necessary to order them to proceed at once to the capital for the protection of the Legation.

I then enquired if he could not give me some more precise assurances with regard to the eventual demands which Russia might possibly put forward, and after some further conversation he approved the following statement, which I wrote down and showed to him:—

“Should circumstances arise to render necessary the presentation of further demands, those demands will not go beyond questions having a particular interest for Russia, such as the settlement of outstanding matters in dispute or other matters having an exclusive interest for Russia in the zone that has been reserved to her, and will not touch questions of a general political interest.”

His Excellency said that he could not tell me anything more definite with regard to these possible demands, as they had not yet been considered by the Council of Ministers; but I gathered from what he said that they may include one for a first option in the matter of railways in north Persia or one for the creation of a police force under Russian control, in return for the withdrawal of the Russian troops from Tabriz.

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

Enclosure 1 in No. 894.

M. de Klemm to Sir G. Buchanan.

Monsieur l'Ambassadeur, *St.-Petersbourg, le 17 (30) novembre, 1911.*

Monsieur Nératow qui se trouve en ce moment au Conseil des Ministres m'a chargé de porter à la connaissance de Votre Excellence ce qui suit.

D'après un télégramme de Monsieur Poklewsky, reçu hier soir, la note contenant nos nouvelles exigences a été remise par lui au Gouvernement Persan hier à midi.

Aujourd'hui Monsieur Nératow vient de télégraphier à Monsieur Poklewsky l'informant de ce que la réponse persane sera considérée par nous comme satisfaisante si dans les 48 heures fixées dans notre note le Gouvernement Persan lui annonce par écrit que les trois points contenant nos exigences sont formellement acceptés et que la démission de Shuster et Lecoffre est un fait accompli. Cependant, vu que les formalités à remplir par rapport à la démission de Shuster pourraient

(*) [v. *supra*, pp. 853-5, No. 876, and *encl.*]

exiger un certain temps, Monsieur Poklewsky est mis en mesure d'accorder au Gouvernement Persan, pour la liquidation complète de la position de ce fonctionnaire, le délai qu'il jugera nécessaire d'après les conditions locales. Quant à la question du remboursement des frais de l'expédition de nos troupes en Perse, il suffirait que le Gouvernement Persan s'engage actuellement à régler cette question lorsque le montant de ces frais aura été fixé.

Si une réponse satisfaisante est reçue, notre détachement n'avancera pas au delà de Recht; mais son rappel en Russie ne pourra avoir lieu que quand l'affaire Shuster aura été complètement terminée.

Veuillez, &c.
W. DE KLEMM.

Enclosure 2 in No. 894.

M. Neratov to Sir G. Buchanan.

Mon cher Ambassadeur, *St.-Petersbourg, le 17/30 novembre, 1911.*

Pour ce qui concerne l'arrêt des troupes à Kazvine, il a été décidé au Conseil des Ministres qu'on devra nécessairement donner aux troupes un repos de quelques jours sans d'ailleurs préciser le temps exact de cet arrêt.

Il me semble cependant que sur ce point nous avons de la marge et que le cas échéant nous pourrions en causer.

Quant à la question du rappel de nos troupes il m'est difficile de Vous donner une réponse catégorique, puisque tout dépendra des circonstances dans lesquelles s'effectuera la marche à l'intérieur du pays. En ce moment-ci il n'entre pas dans nos vues de formuler d'autres demandes en dehors de celles déjà connues, mais si nous sommes forcés d'employer la force pour arriver jusqu'au bout, nos demandes peuvent être augmentées.

Votre sincèrement dévoué,
A. NÉRATOW.

No. 895.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Private.⁽²⁾

My dear Sir Edward,

St. Petersburg, December 4, 1911.

As I have already informed you by telegraph⁽³⁾ I wrote a private letter to Nératow yesterday, asking him to keep the Emperor fully informed of all the communications which I had made to him in your name with regard to the situation in Persia. I laid stress on the grave anxiety which that situation was causing you, more especially as regarded its possible consequences for the Anglo-Russian understanding, and explained how important it was that the Emperor should not, in consequence of your speech,⁽⁴⁾ underestimate the gravity of the questions at issue. I added that had His Majesty been at St. Petersburg, I should have to have asked for an Audience in order to lay your views fully before the Emperor.

I also gave him a summary of what you had instructed me to say about any further demands which the Russian Government may put forward.

I think that Nératow fully realises that any attempt made by the Russian Government to violate the principle on which our understanding is based would

⁽¹⁾ [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to the Prime Minister and to Sir A. Nicolson.]

⁽²⁾ [Grey MSS., Vol. 35.]

⁽³⁾ [Sir G. Buchanan's private telegram of December 3, D. 8.17 P.M., R. 9 P.M., gave this information. It was in reply to a private telegram from Sir Edward Grey of December 2, D. 5.15 P.M., in which he instructed Sir G. Buchanan to ask M. Neratov to "keep the Emperor informed of my anxiety about Persian question." The tenour of both telegrams is given in the above letter. Grey MSS., Vol. 35.]

⁽⁴⁾ [*cp.* Sir Edward Grey's speech of November 27, *Parl. Deb.*, 5th Ser., (House of Commons), Vol. 32, pp. 152-9.]

seriously affect the present intimate relations existing between the two countries, and render it difficult for us to co-operate with the Russian Government in the future in the same way as we have in the past. As, however, he keeps on assuring me that Russia will not violate the independence or integrity of Persia and that her only object is to place her relations with Persia on a more stable basis, he does not see any reason to fear such a consummation. He explained to me on Saturday that the eventual demands which Russia may have to present should she, as seems now inevitable, have to occupy Teheran, must depend on the circumstances under which that occupation is carried out. They would, however, in any case be restricted within proper limits and would not touch questions of a general political character. They would, he assured me, deal solely with outstanding "litiges" and with questions that had an exclusive interest for Russia in her sphere of influence. These assurances, coupled with those contained in the *aide-mémoire* which he gave me before you made your speech last Monday, are most precise and categorical; and whatever happens it will be impossible for the Russian Government to explain them away.

I have repeated textually to Nératow everything that you have instructed me to say to him and I have used every argument that I can think of to dissuade him from an occupation of Teheran. I have told him that whatever confidence we may place in the assurances of the Russian Government, public opinion in England cannot fail to regard such an occupation as a blow struck at Persian independence and consequently at the Anglo-Russian understanding; that a march on Teheran must give rise to every sort of incident and cause complications of which it is impossible to foresee the consequences; and that history tells us how often a temporary occupation is turned into a permanent one. He always meets these arguments by repeating his former assurances and expressing his surprise at what he considers the exaggerated apprehensions expressed in England on the subject. He contends, moreover, that the Government cannot do otherwise than it is doing in view of the manner in which this question is regarded by public opinion in Russia. Here he is on strong ground; for every factor that counts as public opinion here, from the Emperor downwards, is strongly in favour of settling accounts with the Persian Government and regards the occupation of Teheran, now that the Russian demands have been rejected, as the only means of effecting such a settlement.

I do not see how it can now be prevented, and all that we can do is to keep Russia true to the promises which she has given us. It is most unfortunate that the Emperor is at Livadia, as the best way of assuring this would be for me to have an Audience with His Majesty. At present the only person with whom I can talk to any purpose is Nératow. He is, so far as I can form an opinion, trustworthy and is very careful not to give an assurance, unless he is sure that it can be carried out. Kokovtsoff is utterly useless, and I have never been so disappointed with anyone as I have been with him. He has, I honestly believe, the friendliest sentiments for us and he is inspired by the very best intentions; but he does not seem to be in touch with his colleagues or public opinion on the Persian question. He probably has not time to follow closely its various developments; but the most important thing of all is that he is not yet firmly seated in the saddle. He is opposed by reactionaries and by the advocates of a forward policy in the Council of Ministers; as well as by the Court party, who have unfortunately in this Persian business the ear of the Emperor. He is thus unable to exercise a serious influence in foreign policy or even to induce his colleagues to confirm assurances which he gives unconditionally in the most categorical manner. I only hope that when the new elections are over and his position is consolidated, he will be able to speak with more authority, as at present one can place no reliance on what he says.

Sazonow is expected back here next week, and after a short stay will, I believe, proceed to Livadia to join the Emperor. I will of course try and impress him with the gravity of the situation and ask him to explain to the Emperor the anxiety which

it is causing you. He is first going to Paris and it is, as I remarked to Nératow the other day, a thousand pities that his health will not permit of his going to London and discussing Persian affairs with you. . . .⁽⁵⁾

Very sincerely yours,

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

⁽⁵⁾ [The rest of this letter merely acknowledges receipt of Sir G. Barclay's recent telegram and states that Sir Edward Grey's speech in the House of Commons on November 27 was "greatly appreciated" in St. Petersburg.]

No. 896.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 871/1197.

48599/40890/11/34A.

Tel. (No. 770.)

Foreign Office, December 5, 1911, 1.20 P.M.

Your telegram No. 319.⁽²⁾

It would I think be impossible for us to recognize ex-Shah after his flagrant breach of faith in returning to Persia.

I cannot suppose that his restoration is the only way of securing a Gov[ernment] in Persia that will show due regard to Russian interests and this being so it would be unreasonable for Russia to make things very difficult for us by not conceding a point that is of no real importance to her.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Tehran (No. 417). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 866-7, No. 893.]

No. 897.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 871/1197.

48766/40890/11/34.

Tel. (No. 320.)

St. Petersburg, D. December 5, 1911, 9.17 P.M.

R. December 6, 1911, 8 A.M.

Your telegram No. 756.⁽²⁾

Acting M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs] to whom I had already communicated your views in a private letter said that he thought that there must have been some misunderstanding as after all the assurances (I) have had given me he could not quite see reason for your anxiety.

I replied that though we placed full confidence in his assurances there was always danger that circumstances might arise which might render their fulfilment difficult if not impossible. There might be new incidents or assassinations and we might then be told that some exemplary satisfaction must be asked for. Temporary occupation might moreover by the force of circumstances be converted into prolonged one and this would strike a death-blow at our understanding. This was why you were urging that troops should not go to Teheran except in the last resort.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Tehran (as No. 420). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 861, No. 885.]

H[is] E[xcellency] said that troops would not reach Kasvin in sufficient numbers for an advance for eight days; that it would be necessary to establish communication with Enzeli and to rest troops so that they would probably not reach Teheran for a fortnight. If satisfaction was given before they left Kasvin they would not proceed. It was however always possible that the Russian Minister might have to summon detachment to proceed at all speed to protect the lives of foreigners.

I next pressed H[is] E[xcellency] with regard to possible eventual demands. He said that he would not put forward any that touched on political future of Persia without your consent. He had already mentioned to me two possible demands (see my telegram No. 317)⁽³⁾ and he thought that in return for railway concessions Russia might renounce indemnity. Other demands might possibly deal with outstanding claims of individuals and he did not think that it would be necessary to consult you about any demands of above character. I said that I was sure that you would not raise difficulties but as you would have to justify them in Parliament it might be better were he to submit them to you before they were presented. He gave me to understand that he would do so.

I then proceeded to speak as instructed in your telegram No. 765.⁽⁴⁾ I said that if you could state in Parliament that the two Governments had agreed not to recognise the ex-Shah under any circumstances it would create excellent impression and give guarantee for our continued co-operation in Persia.

H[is] E[xcellency] said that he had caused a message to be sent to the ex-Shah a few days ago to the effect that H[is] M[ajesty] could not count upon Russian support. He did not however quite see why such a declaration was necessary at the present moment, while it would virtually bind the two Gov[ernmen]ts never to recognise H[is] M[ajesty] should he be recalled to Persia in a few years' time.

I said that your mind was irrevocably made up never to recognise H[is] M[ajesty] and that it was necessary to undeceive the public who believed that Russian agents in Persia were assisting him and that Russian troops were to replace him on the throne. I reminded H[is] E[xcellency] of the action we had proposed to take when H[is] M[ajesty] landed in Persia last summer and of the plea which H[is] E[xcellency] had then put forward that the two Gov[ernmen]ts could not intervene in an internal conflict. The situation now was entirely different. H[is] M[ajesty] had made his attempt and had failed and his cause was hopeless. If he returned it would be the direct though not the intentional result of Russia's action as in consequence of that action the Persian Gov[ernmen]t was powerless to oppose the ex-Shah.

H[is] E[xcellency] replied that he understood what I meant but a declaration such as I had proposed went too far. He would give an assurance that the ex-Shah would not be recognised so long as Russian troops were in occupation or without the consent of the two Gov[ernmen]ts. I remarked that any declaration that was limited as to time would really be an invitation to H[is] M[ajesty] to return after the expiration of the time specified. He made several other suggestions and I finally made an urgent appeal to him to do as I asked him out of consideration for the difficult position in which you were placed and in the interest of our understanding. The ex-Shah had no qualities to recommend him and I was convinced that you would co-operate with H[is] E[xcellency] to secure the appointment of a Regent and of a Gov[ernmen]t friendly disposed towards Russia. You wished as much as he did to see a stable régime established at Teheran and this might be more effectually accomplished by means of concerted action by our two representatives than by a demand presented at the point of the bayonet.

H[is] E[xcellency] said that he would think over what I had said and see if he could find a satisfactory formula and begged that suggestions which have been made should be treated as confidential for the present.

(3) [v. *supra*, pp. 861-2, No. 886.]

(4) [v. *supra*, p. 866, No. 891.]

MINUTES.

I suppose we should give M. Neratoff time to make up his mind, but I have little hope that he will consent to the joint declaration.

Nothing definite can yet be said as to further demands because the Russian Gov[ernmen]t have not yet made up their minds about them: but the two which they speak of making though not inconsistent with the agreement can hardly be described as inevitable.

H. N.

Dec[ember] 6, 1911.

As regards the advance to Tehran, this is a little better, as it gives time.

M. Neratoff's attitude as to the ex-Shah is most unsatisfactory and it really looks as if they contemplated his being allowed to return to Tehran eventually. I think we should strongly press this point on Count Benckendorff, and in a further telegram to Sir G. Buchanan. I would also suggest that Sir F. Bertie be instructed to speak to M. Sazonow and possibly to M. Isvolsky.

L M

I think we have said enough for the present.

E. G.

No. 898.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir G. Buchanan.

Private.⁽¹⁾

My dear Buchanan,

Foreign Office, December 5, 1911.

I am much obliged to you for your letter received by last Messenger.⁽²⁾ I am afraid you have had an exceedingly anxious and busy fortnight. You have certainly left no stone unturned in your endeavours to moderate the action of the Russian Government. We have done our best to support you from here, both directly through you and also through the intermediary of Benckendorff, who is thoroughly alive to the importance of the issues which have been raised. I am afraid there is little hope of our being able to prevent the Russian troops from advancing to Tehran, owing to the attitude which the Persian Government have assumed, and the determination of the Russians to finish with matters once and for all. I must say that personally I should not be at all displeased if the Bakhtiaris were to carry off their coup d'état and send the Medjliss about their business, and also to establish a Government which would be willing to enter into normal and friendly relations with Russia and ourselves. We cannot, of course, countenance any movement of such a character, but it really would offer the best solution of the question. It is no use disguising the fact that there is a very strong feeling in the House of Commons against Russian action in Persia and also dissatisfaction with our policy in not endeavouring to place an absolute veto on Russian movements. It would be awkward for us to have to deal with the storm which might be raised if Russian troops occupy the Persian capital. The feeling is not confined to the radical Members alone, but also, I am afraid, it exists among others, and I am sorry that Curzon intends to raise a Persian debate in the House of Lords the day after tomorrow.⁽³⁾ He has never been an enthusiastic supporter of the Anglo-Russian Convention; in fact, he was one of its severest critics, and I fear that he may take the opportunity of depreciating it and pointing out its defects and disadvantages. He attended a dinner of what is called "The Persian Society" the other evening, and I understand made a speech eulogising the qualities and virtues of the Persians and encouraging them in their efforts to maintain their independence, and so forth. He ought to know as well as any of us that the Persians are but a poor race, and that they have acted with

⁽¹⁾ [Carnock MSS., Vol. VI of 1911.]

⁽²⁾ [This letter is not reproduced, as it cannot be traced.]

⁽³⁾ [*v. Parl. Deb.*, 5th Ser., (House of Lords), Vol. 10, pp. 677-700.]

great folly ever since the deposition of the ex-Shah. They then had a good opportunity of making friends with Russia and of endeavouring to conciliate her by every means in their power; instead of which, having driven away the ex-Shah with, it must be remembered, the concurrence of Russia, they then proceed to try also to exclude Russian influence and to ignore Russian interests. This was really a suicidal policy and we are now witnessing its fruits. I confess that I am sorry that, after the very strong and firm stand which Grey took up in the House of Commons in defence of Russia's action and policy,⁽¹⁾ the Russian Government did not respond more cordially and fully, and in fact, play up better with the lead which Grey had given them. It should have been their object to facilitate his task which he has undertaken in the face of not too sympathetic a House of Commons towards maintaining the understanding with Russia, instead of which they have really rendered his task more difficult than ever, and have exposed him to considerable criticism from his own party. Of course if too great a strain is put upon our understanding and should lead to its really breaking down, the effects would be felt in the whole international situation and might lead to a complete revision of our foreign policy. But I have hopes that the Russian Government will see the seriousness of the situation and do their best not to push matters to an extreme point. It will be well if their views extend a little beyond the limited horizon of Persia alone, and if they appreciate the fact that it would be most unfortunate if any serious shock is given to the good understanding existing between the two countries. I believe that all these considerations have been put very forcibly before the Russian Government by Benckendorff and I think you yourself have gone as far as you properly could, in indicating to Neratof the larger issues which have been involved in the present controversy. The whole question has greatly preoccupied, and is greatly preoccupying, us here, and we shall be thankful if the ultimate issue enables us to emerge without any serious alteration having been produced in our mutual relations. It is unlucky that at this moment the Emperor is so far away and practically inaccessible, as perhaps if he had been within reach you might have obtained an audience and explained matters fully to him. Of course, I have no doubt that Neratof reports everything to his Sovereign; still a personal interview between you and the Emperor would, no doubt, have had beneficial results. . . .⁽⁵⁾

[A. NICOLSON.]

⁽¹⁾ [*v. Parl. Deb.*, 5th Ser., (House of Commons), Vol. 32, pp. 152-9.]

⁽⁵⁾ [The rest of the letter refers to the German Chancellor's forthcoming speech in the Reichstag (*cp. Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. VII, pp. 758-61, No. 739), and to personal affairs.]

No. 899.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 871/1197.

48913/40890/11/34.

Tel. (No. 323.)

St. Petersburg, December 6, 1911.

D. 8.29 A.M.

R. 10 A.M.

Your telegram No. 770.⁽²⁾

I spoke again to-day to Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs on the subject of the ex-Shah.

His Excellency said he had not yet found a formula that would satisfy you, and that would at the same time not definitely tie hands of two Governments as

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Tehran (as No. 426). Copies were sent to the India Office: to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 872, No. 896.]

regarded future. This he repeated would be a mistake, as we could not tell what the future might have in store. He also asked what were we to do supposing that Bakhtiari were to recall ex-Shah and establish him on throne.

I replied that you had considered all possible eventualities and that nothing could alter your fixed determination. Bakhtiari, I observed, were not so enamoured of the ex-Shah that they would insist on restoring him if they knew beforehand that we would not recognise him. His Excellency then referred to question of a new Regent and asked what would be your attitude with regard to it. I told him that I had received no instructions on the subject, and repeated personal views which I had expressed yesterday. His Excellency concluded by saying that he must have a few days more before giving me a definite answer, but that he was confident we should find some formula to suit us both.

I think that he would be more inclined to meet our wishes were I authorised to tell him that you would *not oppose any* candidate whom he might propose for the Regency. I do not know whether you are prepared to go so far as this, nor do I know whom he has got in view. Only name he has ever mentioned is that of Sardar Assad.⁽³⁾ If this is his candidate, and if we consent, Bakhtiari would be less disposed to call in the ex-Shah. It has occurred to me that his objection to binding two Governments with regard to the future might be got over by a formula somewhat like following:—

“His Majesty’s Government have informed Russian Government that, in conformity with attitude which they have adopted ever since ex-Shah returned to Persia, they would be unable to recognise His Majesty were he *now* to re-establish himself on the Throne. Russian Government have on their side assured them that they will never recognise ex-Shah without consent of His Majesty’s Government, and that so long as Russian troops remain in occupation they will do nothing either to encourage or facilitate His Majesty’s return to the throne.”

Insertion of the word “now” might perhaps meet objection raised by Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs to a declaration that he would never recognise him, while, read in conjunction with assurance that Russia will not do so without our consent, it virtually secures the object which you have in view. I asked his Excellency whether he would state that Russia would not permit ex-Shah to regain his throne so long as Russian troops should remain in occupation, but he declined to assume such a responsibility.

Perhaps you could suggest a better formula if I cannot induce Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs to join us in an absolute declaration of non-recognition. I should be grateful for instructions as soon as possible both on this and on question of new Regent.

I told Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs of what the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs had said, as reported in Sir G. Barclay’s telegram No. 653.⁽⁴⁾ His Excellency remarked that only point that could hurt Persian susceptibilities was the engagement asked for in the second demand. He did not, however, see how he could make any concession with regard to it without exposing us to the danger of appointment of some other foreigner who might act as Shuster had done. Russia was after all only asking for what we had both always insisted on, and what had been observed in practice. As regards indemnity, if Persia would give the required engagement, Russia would either extend payment over a number of years or accept some concession instead of it.

⁽³⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 860, No. 882, and note ⁽⁴⁾.]

⁽⁴⁾ [Sir G. Barclay’s telegram (No. 653) of December 5, 1911, D. 12.15 P.M., R. 6.15 P.M., stated that the Persian Government were anxious to find some new basis for negotiation with Russia, less injurious to Persian independence than the Russian demands. (F.O. 371/1197. 48754/40890/11/34.)]

MINUTES.

I do not think we c[oul]d give Russia carte blanche for appointing a Regent. Sardar Assad w[oul]d be as good an app[oin]tmen]t as any. We might intimate to Russia that we sh[oul]d be prepared to assent to this, and also authorise Sir G. Buchanan to suggest his formula to the Russian Gov[ernmen]t.

R. G. V.
Dec[ember] 7
A P.

In case M. Neratoff returns to the subject of the Regency, Sir G. Buchanan might be told that H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] would not oppose Sardar Assad and I do not see any objections to the formula.⁽⁵⁾

L. M.

⁽⁵⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 782) of December 7, 1911, D. 4 P.M., instructed Sir G. Buchanan in the sense of Mr. Mallet's minute It was repeated to Tehran (No. 429) (F.O. 371/1197. 48913/40890/11/34.)]

No. 900.

Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1197.
49240/40890/11/34.
(No. 587.)

Paris, D. December 8, 1911.
R. December 9, 1911.

Sir,

A dinner was given last night by the Minister for Foreign Affairs in honour of the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs. In addition to the Russian Ambassador and the whole of his staff there were invited to it of the Diplomatic Body the Ambassadors and the Servian Minister, the French Cabinet Ministers, Ex-Presidents of the Council, Ex-Ministers for Foreign Affairs and some French Officials.

After dinner I had a few minutes' conversation with M. Sazonow whom I knew well in 1903 and 1904 at Rome, where he was Secretary of the Russian Legation to the Vatican when I was accredited to the King of Italy, and in the autumn of 1904 when he was Councillor of the Russian Embassy and I was acting as Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office in the place of Sir Thomas Sanderson who was then ill.

In reply to my inquiry as to whether he was going direct to Petersburg from here M. Sazonow stated that he had wished, as was natural, to go to London and see and confer with you before returning to Petersburg, but he had had an abscess on the lung for which he had undergone an operation, and the wound from it in his side was still open. Being a bad sailor he had been strongly advised by the surgeon who had attended him not to run the risk and danger of sea-sickness for it might be a serious matter in his present condition. He was therefore obliged to postpone a visit to London until the spring when he certainly would carry out the intention which for the present he was obliged to abandon. I said that you would much regret not seeing him and particularly the cause which prevented it.

M. Sazonow expressed the wish to discuss with me the situation in Persia and to explain to me for your information his views on the present situation in that country. I told him that I was expecting instructions from you. His Excellency proposed to come to this Embassy and he did so this afternoon.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the Cabinet; to the Private Secretary. A copy was sent to the Director of Military Operations.]

I began the conversation by referring to the anxiety which you felt at the situation created in Persia by the demands made on the Government of that country by the Russian Government and the presence there of Russian troops. I said that the world generally was in a disturbed state; the Morocco question was not entirely settled, the German people were in a very irritated condition and the German Government would no doubt be glad to take advantage of any differences between England and Russia in the question of Persia to endeavour to separate Russia from England and so lessen one of the securities for the preservation of peace, viz:—a thoroughly good understanding between Russia, England and France. It was most important to avoid such differences as they must inevitably have an evil effect on the general political situation. M. Sazonow concurred, and, in case the Russian Ambassador in London had omitted from his account to His Excellency of the conversation which he had with you on the 2nd instant any observations of importance which you had made to the Ambassador on that occasion in regard to the question of Persia, I gave to M. Sazonow for perusal the despatch (No. 315) to Sir George Buchanan⁽²⁾ in which you recorded the conversation. I afterwards handed to His Excellency a Memorandum, of which I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a copy, giving your views as described in your telegram to Sir G. Buchanan No. 779 of yesterday.⁽³⁾

M. Sazonow said that so far as he was personally concerned he concurred in and accepted your views. He could not answer, however, for the acquiescence of the Russian Minister of Finance in your view in regard to the indemnity. He would, however, on reaching Petersburg on the 13th instant do his best to bring about either the dropping of the demand for a money payment or a compromise of some sort the effect of which would be to mitigate the burden of it, and he would discuss the whole question of Persia with His Majesty's Ambassador after he had examined the situation at Petersburg. M. Sazonow then referred to the grievances of Russia against the Persian Government. They were many, he said, and had become more accentuated owing, he feared, to what was Russian consideration for Persian weakness but had been interpreted as Russian weakness by the Persian Government, viz.—the premature withdrawal of the Russian troops when on a previous occasion they were marching towards Teheran. Oriental peoples were not persuaded by any argument but force and the Persian Government had traded on the patience of Russia. M. Sazonow said that he fully appreciated the importance of not allowing the Persian question to assume dimensions that might react on the general relations between Russia and England and you might depend upon his doing his best to bring about a settlement to avoid such a result. He thought there was unnecessary nervousness in England in regard to Russian policy in Persia. The Russian Government had no desire to occupy Teheran unless absolutely necessary to obtain satisfaction nor to see a restoration of the Ex-Shah. His Majesty was entirely discredited in Persia and he could not be of any service to Russian designs against the integrity of Persia if such designs existed, which they certainly did not.⁽⁴⁾

M. Sazonow leaves Paris on the evening of the 10th instant.

I have, &c.

FRANCIS BERTIE.

⁽²⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 862-3, No. 887.]

⁽³⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 779) to Sir G. Buchanan, D. December 7, 1911, 3.15 p.m., is not reproduced, as the contents are sufficiently indicated in the Memorandum enclosed in this despatch. It was repeated to Tehran (No. 427); to Paris (No. 339). Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 340) to Sir F. Bertie of the same date instructed him to give the memorandum to M. Sazonov. (F.O. 371/1197. 49055/40890/11/34.)]

⁽⁴⁾ [Sir F. Bertie's language to M. Sazonov was approved by Sir Edward Grey in his despatch (No. 523) of December 13, 1911. (F.O. 371/1197. 49240/40890/11/34.) He was instructed in Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 346) of December 8, 1911, to supplement the memorandum which he was to give to M. Sazonov by an explication that point 6 "was intended to mean that all Russian troops, including those at Tabriz and Ardebil, would be withdrawn from Northern Persia when order was re-established." (F.O. 371/1197. 49055/40890/11/34.) This telegram was repeated to St. Petersburg (No. 789).]

Enclosure in No. 900.

Memorandum communicated to M. Sazonow.

The question of Persia is the source of great anxiety to Sir Edward Grey. He has spoken seriously on the subject to Count Benckendorff who will no doubt have reported to M. Sazonow the conversation which Sir Edward Grey had with the Ambassador on the 2nd instant.

Sir Edward Grey desires to put on record now his views on certain points in order to avoid the risk of a possible difference between the Russian and British Governments and to indicate the lines on which in his opinion they may continue to co-operate and in doing so he considers it desirable that he should be explicit on certain matters of importance, viz. :—

1. He recognizes that the outcome of the present situation must be to secure the establishment of a Government in Persia that will conform to the principles of the Anglo-Russian Agreement and pay proper regard to the special interests of Great Britain and Russia respectively.
2. It would not be consistent with the dignity of England to recognize a restoration of the Ex-Shah after the manner in which he has disregarded the warnings given to him by both the Russian and the British Governments not to return to Persia. His restoration cannot be essential to the object described in point 1. It would moreover give rise to apprehension in Persia of vindictive measures on his part against those who were instrumental in expelling him from the country. Sir Edward Grey therefore trusts that the Russian Government will not add to the embarrassments of the situation by permitting the restoration of the Ex-Shah to be the outcome of the present crisis.
3. The Russian and British Ministers at Teheran should at once confer together as to the selection of a foreign financial adviser to be recommended as successor to M. Shuster, for it is most important that one should be found who would be acceptable to both England and Russia.
4. As soon as the Russian demands on the Persian Government have been conceded, the British and Russian Governments should together consider and co-operate in measures, a loan being one of them, for preventing chaos and for putting the Persian Government into a position to restore order.
5. The demand for an indemnity put forward by Russia, would, if exacted, materially impair the object set forth in point 4. Sir E. Grey hopes that when the present crisis is past the Russian Government will find means of avoiding the difficulty which would be caused by an insistence on the payment of an indemnity.
6. Sir E. Grey understands that, as soon as the Russian demands have been complied with and order in Northern Persia has been restored, the military measures and occupation of Persian territory which are now in progress and are stated to be provisional and not permanent, will cease.

Sir Edward has directed Sir Francis Bertie when communicating his views to M. Sazonow to state that the only point on which it seems possible to take immediate action is the consideration by the British and Russian representatives at Teheran of the question of a successor to Mr. Shuster, but Sir E. Grey trusts that M. Sazonow will concur with him that the policy which he has outlined accords with the views of the Russian Government.

Paris, December 8th, 1911.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1198.

St. Petersburg, December 9, 1911.

49434/40890/11/34.

D. 12.5 A.M.

Tel. (No. 331.)

R. 8 A.M.

Sir G. Barclay's telegrams Nos. 668,⁽²⁾ 670⁽³⁾ and 671.⁽⁴⁾

I spoke to Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs this afternoon very seriously on the situation, and in order that he might not think that I was exaggerating the opposition with which you are confronted in Parliament, I said I would read him what so true a friend of Russia as Sir A. Nicolson had written to me privately.⁽⁵⁾ I added that there now seemed a hope that the Persian Government would comply with the Russian demands, but that if these hopes were to be realised it was absolutely necessary that the Russian Government should give definite assurances that in such case their troops would be recalled. I warned him again that the occupation of Tehran must be avoided at all costs, as otherwise Anglo-Russian understanding would hardly bear the strain.

After repeating what he has so often told me before in vindication of Russian action, his Excellency said that his position at present was a very delicate one, as Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs was expected back on Wednesday. He thought, however, that Russian Government would give assurance that troops would not leave Kazvin before 21st December, and that if the three demands were complied with before that date troops of expeditionary force would be immediately recalled, provided that in the meantime no fresh incident was created by Persians, such as, for example, an attack on a consulate, etc. Withdrawal of troops from Tabreez would have to be made the subject of a special arrangement with the Persian Government in return for the creation of a police force in the north. He would consult President of Council and let me have a definite reply as soon as possible.

As regards Regent, he said that Russia would not object to his remaining provided that his position could be in some way strengthened *vis-à-vis* the Medjliss. As things were at present he was too weak a man to cope with the situation. The present state of affairs was a violation of the original constitution, and Senate ought to be created and powers of the Medjliss reduced. He then enquired if you would support the Russian Government should they desire to recommend to the Regent any Persian for the post of Prime Minister. I said that I could not answer this question, but I repeated what you had told the Russian Ambassador concerning the possibility of the two Governments securing a Persian Government well disposed towards Russia.

I remarked that he had several times lately hinted to me that he desired our support with regard to eventual possible demands without clearly precisising them. He did not himself seem to know exactly what he wanted, and he could hardly therefore expect us to promise our support beforehand. I personally thought the best course would be for the Russian Minister at Tehran to confer with Sir G. Barclay on any proposals which he might think necessary to put forward for the purpose

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Tehran (as No. 440) on December 11. Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [Sir G. Barclay's telegram (No. 668) of December 8, 1911, D. 1.35 P.M., R. 2 P.M., stated that the Regent had decided to remain in Tehran. (F.O. 371/1197. 49186/40890/11/34.)]

⁽³⁾ [Sir G. Barclay's telegram (No. 670) of December 8, 1911, D. 7.40 P.M., R. 9 P.M., stated that the Persian Government were anxious to restore friendly relations with Russia by the removal of the ex-Shah. (F.O. 371/1197. 49202/40890/11/34.)]

⁽⁴⁾ [Sir G. Barclay's telegram (No. 671) of December 8, 1911, D. 7.40 P.M., R. 9.30 P.M., reported a conversation between the British and Russian representatives and Sirdar Assad. The Russian Minister stated that the troops would advance to Tehran if the demands were not met. (F.O. 371/1197. 49203/40890/11/34.)]

⁽⁵⁾ [*v. supra*, pp. 874-5, No. 898.]

of placing Perso-Russian relations on a more stable and friendly basis, as the latter could then report to you his views with regard to them.

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs admitted that the Russian Government had not yet considered measures which would ultimately have to be recommended at Tehran, but expressed concurrence in my suggestion. Though his Excellency said that Persian counter-proposal with regard to second demand was too vague for the Russian Government to accept, he seems really desirous to avoid an advance on Tehran, and I think he would be encouraged to pursue a conciliatory policy if I might tell him that you had instructed Sir G. Barclay to confer with the Russian Minister on any proposals which the latter might submit to him, and if I might add that you would approach all such proposals in a sincere desire to meet the wishes of the Russian Government as far as it was possible for you to do so.⁽⁶⁾

(⁶) [Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 801) of December 11, 1911, D. 7.15 P.M., instructed Sir G. Buchanan to inform M. Neratov that Sir Edward Grey has told the Persian Minister that he thought any discussion as to a formula giving assurance for the future should be direct through the Russian Minister at Tehran. He was to say further that Sir Edward Grey would instruct Sir G. Barclay to co-operate at Tehran in getting Persian acceptance for any concession in point of form which Russia might feel able to make. The telegram also authorized Sir G. Buchanan to speak to M. Neratov in the sense of the last paragraph of the above telegram. (F.O. 371/1198 49807/40890/11/34.)]

No. 902.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1198.

50013/40890/11/34.

(No: 360.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, D. December 9, 1911.

R. December 14, 1911.

On receipt of your telegram No. 756 of the 2nd instant⁽²⁾ I addressed a private letter to the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, expressing the hope that he would not present any more far-reaching demands to the Persian Government without first consulting you: and in a conversation, which I had with him two days later, I reverted to the subject, observing that the Imperial Government hardly seemed to realise the danger of allowing the Persian Question to become so acute as to involve the question of the general foreign policy and future co-operation of the two Governments.

Monsieur Nératow said that he had not replied to my letter at once, as he wished to ask me whether some misunderstanding had by any chance arisen, for he could not otherwise understand why you should, after all the assurances which he had given me, take so serious a view of the situation.

I replied that we placed entire confidence in His Excellency's good faith and in all that he had told me with regard to the intentions of the Imperial Government; but circumstances might arise which might so alter the situation that it would be difficult if not impossible for the Imperial Government to give effect to their assurances. This was the reason why you were urging that the occupation of Teheran should only take place in the very last resort. The march of Russian troops on the capital would be sure to give rise to regrettable incidents, while it was more than likely that there would be a series of assassinations at Teheran itself. We might then be told that the Imperial Government had found it necessary, in consequence of

(¹) [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the Cabinet A copy was sent to the Director of Military Operations.]

(²) [*v. supra*, p. 861, No. 885.]

some fresh provocation, to demand satisfaction of a more exemplary character. Then there was the further danger that what was now intended to be a mere temporary occupation might, by the force of circumstances, be converted into an indefinite one; and an occupation of this nature would infallibly give the death blow to the Anglo-Russian understanding.

His Excellency replied that there were only two grounds on which an advance to Teheran would be ordered, namely—if no satisfaction had been received before the troops had left Kazvin, or if Monsieur Poklewsky should consider their presence necessary for the protection of the lives of foreigners. The main body of the troops would not reach Kazvin for eight days, as it would be necessary to provide for the maintenance of communications with Enzeli, and they would probably have to rest there two or three days. We had thus got nearly a fortnight before they could reach Teheran, always supposing that Monsieur Poklewsky did not ask for a detachment of Cossacks to be dispatched at all speed for his protection. It seemed from the reports which had reached him that a small body of men, with a couple of guns, was being organised at Teheran to oppose the advance of the Russian troops. This was unfortunate, as though the resistance which it might offer would be of no account it was very desirable to avoid a regular conflict on account of the complications to which it might lead. The conduct of the military operations would, His Excellency added, be naturally in the hands of the General in command; and he would have to decide, if the occasion arose, as to which parts of the town it would be advisable to occupy.

On my turning the conversation to the question of the possible presentation of further demands, Monsieur Nératow said that he would not put forward any that touched the political future of Persia without first consulting you and obtaining your consent. He had in our last conversation told me that Russia might perhaps ask for the creation of an armed force of some kind to maintain order in north Persia, in return for the withdrawal of her troops from Tabriz, as well as for a first option in the matter of railways. She might possibly in return for such railway concessions renounce her claim to an indemnity, while any other demands which she might make would only have reference to outstanding cases in which Russian subjects had claims against the Persian Government. Under these circumstances it would hardly, he thought, be necessary to consult you before any of the above demands were presented. I replied that though I was sure that you would not raise any unnecessary difficulties, it would be preferable that such demands should be first submitted to you, in view of the fact that you would eventually have to justify them in Parliament. His Excellency, who still seemed unconvinced, finally gave a half-hearted assent.

I then proceeded to speak in the terms of your telegram No. 765 of the 4th instant,⁽³⁾ on the subject of the ex-Shah. If, I said, His Excellency would authorise you to state in Parliament that the two Governments had agreed not to recognise His Majesty under any circumstances, such a statement would go far to abate the opposition to Russia's recent action and would at the same time serve as a pledge for our future co-operation in Persia.

Monsieur Nératow told me in reply that he had only a few days ago caused a message to be sent to Mohammed Ali, warning him that he must not count on Russia's support. He did not, however, quite see the object of such a statement as you had proposed at the present moment. It went moreover too far and would have the effect of binding the two Governments never to recognise the ex-Shah should he be recalled to Persia in a few years' time.

I said that the decision which you had taken was an irrevocable one, and that it was essential that publicity should be given to it at the present moment. It was generally believed in Persia, and even in certain quarters in England, that Russian agents were preparing the way for Mohammed Ali's return and that Russian troops were about to replace him on the throne. It was necessary, therefore, to undeceive

(3) [*v. supra*, p. 866, No. 891.]

public opinion and to show that there was no truth in these reports. I reminded Monsieur Nératow that when the ex-Shah landed in Persia last summer, he had declined to join us in notifying to His Majesty that we would not recognise him on the plea that such a procedure would be contrary to the principle on which we had always acted, of never intervening in these internal conflicts.⁽⁴⁾ The situation now was entirely different. Mohammed Ali had made his attempt and had failed; he had undergone defeat after defeat at the hands of the Government troops, and his cause was a hopeless one. If he now succeeded in regaining the throne it would be solely due to the fact that Russian troops were on their way to Teheran, and that in consequence the Persian Government was powerless. If we now kept silence, the whole blame for what might happen would be laid at the door of the Russian Government.

His Excellency admitted that there was much truth in what I had said, but again contended that if there was a popular movement in his favour in a few years' time, we might be compelled to recognise him. I observed that when a few months ago there was a question of the ex-Shah again seeking asylum in Russia, His Excellency had himself told me that we might be quite easy as regarded the future, as His Majesty had been so bitterly disappointed with the reception which he had met with in Persia that he would never show his face there again.

Monsieur Nératow then put forward several suggestions that he thought would meet the requirements of the case, of which one was that the Russian Government should give an assurance that the ex-Shah should not be recognised so long as the Russian troops remained in occupation, and another that they would not recognise him without the consent of His Majesty's Government. I pointed out that a declaration to which a time limit was attached would amount to an invitation to His Majesty to return when the time specified had expired, and I finally appealed to him to act as you suggested out of regard to the difficult position in which you were placed, as well as in the interest of the Anglo-Russian understanding. The ex-Shah, I remarked, had never displayed any qualities that rendered him desirable as a ruler; and if only His Excellency would meet your wishes on this point, I was sure that you would co-operate with him to secure the appointment of a Regent and the constitution of a Government at Teheran that would be friendly disposed towards Russia. The object which both Governments had in view was the same. They both desired to see a stable régime established in Persia, and they were only at variance on the question of the means to be employed to accomplish this end. I was, however, firmly convinced that concerted action by our two Representatives would be found more effectual than the presentation of demands at the point of the bayonet.

Monsieur Nératow replied that he sincerely desired to see the co-operation of the two Governments maintained, adding that he would endeavour to find a formula that would give you satisfaction.

In a conversation which I had with him on the following day Monsieur Nératow, while expressing the confident hope that we should eventually find a solution that would suit both Governments, still maintained his objection to any statement that would bind the two Governments irrevocably in the future. In support of his contention he remarked that some of the Bakhtiari were said to be in favour of recalling Mahommed Ali, and asked what would be our position after making such a statement, supposing that they placed him once more on the throne. I replied that you had considered this, as well as other possible eventualities, and that nothing could now alter your fixed determination. The Bakhtiari, I observed, were not so enamoured of the ex-Shah as to insist on restoring him, were they informed beforehand that we would not recognise him.

From the language which His Excellency held in the course of our subsequent conversation, I gather that he might be more disposed to waive his objection to your

(4) [*v. supra*, pp 778-80, No. 792]

proposed statement were he to be officially assured that His Majesty's Government would meet the wishes of the Russian Government with regard to the appointment of a new Regent. I told him that I had received no instructions to discuss this subject, but that I knew that you were anxious that the Government which might eventually be installed at Teheran should be well disposed towards Russia, and that the term Government presumably included the Regent. Though he had in a previous conversation mentioned Sardar Assad's name as a possible Regent, His Excellency did not on this occasion say anything to indicate whom he had in his mind as a candidate for the post.

I called again on His Excellency yesterday and handed him an *aide-mémoire*, of which I have the honour to enclose a copy, embodying the six points laid down in your telegram No. 779⁽⁵⁾ of the preceding day. I explained that you had thought it right, in order to prevent any possible misunderstanding, to record the lines of policy that would enable the two Governments to continue to work together, and I further expressed the hope that the Russian Government would be able to say that the views held by His Majesty's Government were in accordance with their own. After promising to give these six points his careful consideration, Monsieur Nératow remarked that as regarded Mr. Shuster's successor it was, in his opinion, essential that no foreign advisers should again be engaged from among the subjects or citizens of any of the Great Powers and that the attributions of the future Financial Adviser should be carefully defined, so that it would be impossible for him to usurp dictatorial powers.

I subsequently submitted to Monsieur Nératow the proposed parliamentary statement with regard to the ex-Shah, the text of which you had approved in your telegram No. 782 of the 7th instant.⁽⁶⁾ His Excellency took exception to the words "in conformity with the attitude which they have adopted ever since the ex-Shah returned to Persia" in the first sentence, and to the word "never" in the second. After discussing various amendments, His Excellency finally accepted the following text as open to no objections, though he added that he must first submit it to Monsieur Sazonow, who was now at Paris:—

"His Majesty's Government have informed the Russian Government that they would be unable to recognise the ex-Shah were he now to re-establish himself on the throne. The Russian Government have on their side assured them that were the ex-Shah now to attempt to regain the throne, they would equally not recognise him, and that so long as the Russian troops remain in occupation they will do nothing either to encourage or facilitate His Majesty's return to the throne."

His Excellency once more reverted to the question of a possible change of Regent, and on my informing him that you would not raise any objections to the appointment of Sirdar Assad, observed that he had not any particular candidate in view. The Russian Government had indeed nothing whatever against Nasr-ul-Mulk, except the fact that he was not a strong man: and a strong man would be required if the Mejliss continued recalcitrant. In that case the only way out of the present difficulty would be for the Regent to dissolve them. There were however very few strong men in Persia. Perhaps the Sipahdar was one, but he did not know whether either he or Sirdar Assad was really qualified for the post. Should the occasion arise it would perhaps be best that Sir George Barclay and Monsieur Poklewsky should consult together and submit the names of those whom they considered most suitable for the post.

On my informing His Excellency that according to the latest telegrams received from Sir G. Barclay the Mejliss seemed more disposed to yield, Monsieur Nératow

⁽⁵⁾ [v. *supra*, pp. 877-9, No. 900, and *encl.* and *note* (3).]

⁽⁶⁾ [v. *supra*, p. 877, No. 899, *note* (5).]

said that were the Russian demands complied with it might perhaps not be necessary to effect the change in the Regency.

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

Enclosure in No. 902.

Aide-mémoire.

(1.) Il est nécessaire que la situation actuelle en Perse ait pour résultat l'établissement d'un Gouvernement Persan qui ne négligera pas les intérêts spéciaux de la Russie et de la Grande Bretagne, et qui se conformera aux principes de l'accord Anglo-Russe.

(2.) Pour atteindre ce but il ne peut être indispensable que l'ex-Schah remonte sur le trône. Cette restauration donnerait lieu de craindre des mesures de représailles de la part de l'ex-Schah contre ceux des Perses qui ont pris part à son expulsion. Vu le peu de cas que Mohammed Ali a fait des conseils qui lui ont été donnés par les deux Puissances de ne pas retourner en Perse, il serait incompatible avec la dignité des deux Puissances de la reconnaître maintenant. Sir E. Grey se plaint donc à espérer que la Russie n'ajoutera pas aux difficultés de la situation en permettant que la crise actuelle ait comme résultat la restauration de l'ex-Schah.

(3.) Il est de la plus haute importance que Monsieur Shuster ait sans aucun délai pour successeur un Conseiller Financier étranger qui serait également acceptable à la Russie et à la Grande Bretagne. Les deux Représentants à Téhéran devraient après d'être préalablement consultés à ce sujet, soumettre une recommandation à leurs Gouvernements respectifs.

(4.) Lorsque les demandes russes auront été acceptées les Gouvernements Britannique et Russe devraient co-opérer pour faciliter les mesures, telles qu'un emprunt, qui mettraient le Gouvernement Persan en mesure de rétablir l'ordre et de mettre fin à l'anarchie existant en Perse.

(5.) Si la Russie exigeait le paiement d'une indemnité ceci constituerait un empêchement sérieux à la réalisation du but indiqué dans l'article précédent. Sir E. Grey aime par conséquent à croire que lorsque la crise actuelle sera passée le Gouvernement Impérial trouvera moyen d'éviter cette difficulté.

(6.) Il est bien entendu que l'occupation de territoire persan et les mesures militaires que la Russie prend en ce moment ont un caractère non pas permanent mais provisoire, et qu'ils prendront fin dès que satisfaction aura été donnée aux demandes russes et que l'ordre aura été rétabli dans le nord de la Perse.

St.-Petersbourg, le 25 novembre/8 décembre, 1911.

No. 903.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1198.

50500/40890/11/34.

(No. 371.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, D. December 13, 1911.

R. December 18, 1911.

In continuation of my Despatch No. 360 of the 9th instant,⁽²⁾ I have the honour to report that, in a conversation which I had with Monsieur Nératow on that day,

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the Cabinet on December 30. A copy was sent to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [v. immediately preceding document.]

I once more tried to bring home to him the gravity of the present situation pointing out that the occupation of Tehran by Russian troops would put such a strain on the Anglo-Russian Understanding that it ought to be avoided at all costs. The action recently taken by the Imperial Government in Persia had, I said, evoked numerous expressions of disapproval in the House of Commons; and His Majesty's Government were even being taken to task for having tolerated it. In order that he might not underestimate the opposition with which you were confronted, I would adopt a very unusual course and read to him, in confidence, passages from a letter, which I had that morning received from so warm a friend of Russia as Sir A. Nicolson, that was intended for my personal information alone.⁽³⁾ His Excellency would then see how strong was the feeling, to which I had referred, and what serious consequences might ensue were matters now to be pushed too far. After reading, in a somewhat modified form what Sir Arthur had written to me on the subject, I told His Excellency that, according to the latest telegram from Sir G. Barclay, the Persian Government seemed now more disposed to comply with the Russian demands. If, however, any hopes that we might entertain of their speedy submission were to be realised, it was absolutely necessary that the Imperial Government should at once give a definite assurance that the Russian troops would be recalled as soon as the Persian Government had accepted the three demands.

Monsieur Nératow, in reply, contended that the action to which Russia had had recourse, had been forced on her by Persia and that the demands themselves were most moderate. He could not, at the present moment, take upon himself the responsibility of giving me such an assurance as I had suggested, as he was in rather a delicate position owing to the fact that Monsieur Sazonoff was expected back next Wednesday. He would, however, talk the matter over with the President of the Council. He personally thought that the Imperial Government might give an assurance that the troops would not advance beyond Kasvin before the 21st of this month and that, if the three demands were complied with by that date, the expeditionary force would be recalled, provided that, in the meanwhile, no fresh incident occurred, such as an attack on a Russian Consulate, &c. As regarded the withdrawal of the troops from Tabriz, to which I had previously called his attention, in accordance with the instructions conveyed to me in your telegram No. 789 of the 8th December,⁽⁴⁾ Monsieur Nératow said that this would have to be made the subject of a special arrangement with the Persian Government in return for the creation of a police force, under Russian control, to maintain order in the North. His Excellency added that he was still unable to give me a definite undertaking with regard to the non-recognition of the Ex-Shah and I rather gathered from his allusion to Lord Morley's recent speech in the House of Lords⁽⁵⁾ that he was somewhat disagreeably surprised to find that we had not awaited his reply before making a statement on the subject.

On my informing him that Nasr-ul-Mulk had not apparently any intention of resigning the Regency, Monsieur Nératow said that Russia would not object to his remaining provided that his position could be strengthened. As things were at present, he was by far too weak a man to cope with the Mejliss; and the powers usurped by the latter, in violation of the Constitution, ought to be restricted. A Senate ought also to be created, as such a body would be able to give valuable support to the Regent.

Monsieur Nératow then proceeded to enquire whether the Russian Government could count on your support, should they wish to put forward any particular candidate for the post of Prime Minister. I replied that this was a question which I could not answer, but that I knew that you had, in a recent conversation with

⁽³⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp. 874-5, No. 898.]

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. supra*, p. 878, No. 900, *note* (4).]

⁽⁵⁾ [*v. Parl. Deb.*, 5th Ser., (House of Lords), Vol. 10, pp. 695-7.]

Count Benckendorff, spoken of the possibility of the two Governments securing a Persian Government that would be well-disposed towards Russia. His Excellency had, I said, on several occasions lately thrown out hints that he expected you to support proposals, which he might eventually think it advisable to formulate at Tehran. He had, however, never clearly defined the nature of these proposals nor did he, apparently, really know his own mind with regard to them. He could therefore, hardly expect us to promise him our support beforehand, when he could not even tell us for what purposes it would be required. His Excellency admitted the justice of what I had said and expressed his concurrence when I suggested that it would perhaps be best that Monsieur Poklewsky should submit to Sir George Barclay any proposals, which the Russian Government might think it desirable to make for the purpose of placing Perso-Russian relations on a more stable and friendly basis. Sir George Barclay would then be able, after discussing them with Monsieur Poklewsky to furnish you with his views with regard to them.

On the following evening—the 10th instant—I received a private letter from Monsieur Nératow, of which a copy is enclosed, transmitting to me a statement of the views of the Russian Government on the subject of the Ex-Shah and giving certain conditional assurances with regard to the eventual withdrawal of the Russian troops.

In a conversation which I had with Monsieur Nératow two days later, I told him that I had been rather disappointed to find that the language of his *Aide-mémoire* was not quite so precise as he had led me to hope. His Excellency, however, would not admit this and maintained that the assurances which it recorded both with regard to the Ex-Shah and to the eventual withdrawal of the Russian troops, were quite explicit.

I subsequently urged His Excellency to try to find some formula for the presentation of the second demand that would render it more acceptable to the Persian Government, and suggested that this might be done by substituting the word "consultation" for "consent." Monsieur Nératow however, replied that this was impossible and also declined to consider several other suggestions which I submitted to him. He could not, he said, make any concession as regarded the tenour of the demand in question, though he was willing to admit a modification of its text. He had already authorised Monsieur Poklewsky to try and find a formula that would take more account of Persian susceptibilities and he would not insist on the retention of the words "consent" and "engages to," if suitable equivalents could be found. He would, for example, be satisfied were the Persian Government to declare that they would not in future engage foreign advisers without a previous "entente" or "accord" with the two Legations.

On my communicating to him the substance of your conversation with the Persian Minister, reported in your telegram No. 801 of the 11th December, (*) Monsieur Nératow said that he was very glad that you had held such language to His Excellency. It was most important that the Russian public should not imagine that His Majesty's Government were bringing pressure to bear on the Imperial Government and that they should believe that any concessions, which the latter might make, were made spontaneously and not in consequence of our intervention. He therefore hoped that we would avoid saying anything that might inspire such a suspicion and that we would confine ourselves to urging the Persian Government to comply with the demands, which Russia had formulated. He thanked me for the assurance which you had authorised me to give him, that Sir G. Barclay would be instructed to discuss with Monsieur Poklewsky any proposals which the latter might submit for the purpose of placing Russo-Persian relations on a more friendly and stable footing and that you would approach all such proposals with a sincere desire to meet as far as possible the wishes of the Imperial Government. His Excellency added that Monsieur Poklewsky would not fail to communicate to Sir G. Barclay any proposals that the Imperial Government might think it advisable

(*) [v. *supra*, p. 881, No. 901, note (*).]

to make with regard to the general political situation; but I gathered that he did not think that it would be necessary to do so with regard to matters which concerned Russian interests exclusively.

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

Enclosure 1 in No. 903.

M. Neratov to Sir G. Buchanan.

Mon cher Ambassadeur, *St.-Petersbourg, le 27 novembre/10 décembre, 1911.*
Je Vous transmets sous ce pli un exposé de notre manière de voir au sujet de l'Ex-Shah qui correspond en général au projet que Vous m'avez laissé vendredi. J'ai cru devoir y ajouter notre point de vue sur les mouvements éventuels de notre détachement de Kazvine.

J'aime à croire que cet exposé fournira à Sir Edward Grey la matière nécessaire pour une déclaration au Parlement au sujet de la politique russe en Perse, ainsi qu'il en avait exprimé le désir.

A. NERATOW.

Enclosure 2 in No. 903.

Aide-mémoire.

Le Gouvernement Impérial ayant déclaré à plusieurs reprises que les mesures militaires auxquelles il a été forcé d'avoir recours en Perse n'ont absolument aucun rapport avec les aspirations de Mohammed Ali Schah au trône persan, il tient à confirmer à nouveau cette déclaration de la manière la plus catégorique. Il ne voudrait en aucun cas qu'on pût lui attribuer l'intention d'imposer un souverain à la Perse et de déroger au principe de non-intervention dans la lutte de l'Ex-Schah avec le Gouvernement actuel, principe qu'il avait proclamé dès le début.

Par conséquent le Gouvernement Impérial déclare que si l'Ex-Schah profitait actuellement de la présence en Perse du corps d'expédition russe pour réaliser ses desseins le Gouvernement Russe ne le reconnaîtrait pas comme souverain du pays, sans un accord préalable avec le Gouvernement Britannique.

Le Gouvernement Russe a pris connaissance avec plaisir de la communication de Sir G. Buchanan annonçant que le Cabinet de Londres, à son tour, lui promet son appui le plus énergique pour l'établissement de rapports normaux entre la Russie et la Perse, ainsi que pour la formation et le maintien d'un Cabinet et pour l'élection—s'il en est question—d'un Régent, bien disposés envers la Russie.

Le Ministère Impérial est en mesure d'affirmer que le détachement russe concentré à Kazvine ne continuera pas sa marche sur Téhéran avant le 8/21 décembre si toutefois le Ministre de Russie ne se voit pas forcé, dans le cas où la situation deviendrait menaçante, d'appeler les troupes dans la capitale avant cette date.

Le Gouvernement Impérial est animé du désir de faire retirer ledit détachement de Kazvine aussi tôt que possible et il compte mettre à exécution ce dessein dès que le Gouvernement Persan se sera soumis aux exigences qui lui ont été formulées. Le Gouvernement Russe aime à espérer qu'aucun nouvel incident ne viendra à se produire tel que des actes de violence sur la personne d'un agent russe, une attaque contre les institutions russes ou nos troupes, des actes de provocation envers la Russie, des troubles en général, &c. De pareils faits rendraient évidemment impossible le rappel du détachement.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1198.
50171/40890/11/34.
Tel. (No. 337.)

St. Petersburg, December 14, 1911.

D. 7.30 P.M.

R. 8.30 P.M.

In a conversation which I have just had with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, I spoke of the serious preoccupation that the Persian question was causing you. His Excellency said that he hoped misapprehensions and suspicions entertained in some quarters in England as to Russia's intentions had now been dissipated.

We then discussed the three demands.⁽²⁾ As regards the first, Shuster's dismissal must, His Excellency said, be an accomplished fact, and if he remained on for a little at Tehran it must be on the distinct understanding that he took no part either directly or indirectly in Government business.

His Excellency next read me the text of the last formula proposed by the Persian Government respecting the engagement of foreign officials (see Sir G. Barclay's No. 686).⁽³⁾ His Excellency said he would accept it with substitution of words "arrive at an understanding" for "enter on an exchange of views," as the latter constituted no real engagement. After some discussion I suggested that text should run "to enter into an exchange of views for the purpose of arriving at an understanding with the two legations." He finally said that some such words might do, but that before giving a definite answer he must submit them to the Emperor.

As regards indemnity, he assured me that Russian Government would not be hard on Persia, and had no intention of extorting a large sum from her.

I then asked whether he would not give the Persian Government a definite assurance that troops would be withdrawn when once three above demands were complied with. He replied that he would give us such an assurance, but that he would not give Persians any more assurances whatever, as they did not deserve them, and he would prefer that you should not do so either. I then told him of the *aide-mémoire* given me by Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs,⁽⁴⁾ adding that you would probably have communicated to Parliament to-day⁽⁵⁾ the assurance which it contained on this subject. His Excellency answered that he had no objection to your doing so, but that, of course, this assurance only applied to withdrawal of troops from Kazvin to some other point like Resht, and not to their definite recall from Persian territory. I said that it was quite impossible to restrict this assurance in the sense which he had suggested. He then sent for Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, who at once confirmed my contention that it meant complete withdrawal of the expeditionary force from Persia. His Excellency said he was very glad to hear it, as now we seemed nearly in sight of a settlement. He added that I might assure you that he had not the least wish to occupy Tehran, and that he trusted that all necessity for such a step would be removed by speedy compliance of the Persian Government with the three demands.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to Tehran (as No. 453). Copies were sent to the India Office, to the Director of Military Operations]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. supra*, p. 842, No. 868.]

⁽³⁾ [Sir G. Barclay's telegram (No. 686) of December 13, 1911, D. 10 A.M., R. 10.30 A.M., contained the following text of the proposed formula:—

"As regards engagement of foreign officials or officers needed by Persia for the organisation of the public services, Persia animated by the desire to maintain on all occasions the best relations with Great Britain and Russia will see to it that the choice of these persons shall not be such as to injure the legitimate interests of the two Powers in Persia. Consequently the Persian Gov[ernmen]t will be ready, as regards these officers and officials to enter into an exchange of views with the two legations." (F.O. 371/1198. 49920/40890/11/34.)]

⁽⁴⁾ [*v. immediately preceding document, encl.*]

⁽⁵⁾ [*v. Parl. Deb., 5th Ser., (House of Commons), Vol. 32, pp. 2598-2608.*]

MINUTE

M Sazonow's attitude as shown in the passages marked, is puzzling.

H. N.
L. M.
A. N.
E. G.

No. 905.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1198.
50768/40890/11/34.
Tel. (No. 834.)

Foreign Office, December 16, 1911.

Persian Minister has again made earnest appeal to me desiring assurances about second Russian demand to be private. I pointed out that Russia, having put forward demand publicly could not be expected to be satisfied with private assurances thus giving impression in public that demand had been waived. I said I understood a formula had been proposed by Persian Gov[ernmen]t, which Russian Gov[ernmen]t were considering sympathetically though it would require strengthening. When pressed for assurances about withdrawal of troops and other matters I said I could add nothing to assurances given direct by Russian Minister to Persian Gov[ernmen]t about troops and generally that I could not assume position of mediator. Russian Gov[ernmen]t would naturally after all that had passed not accept mediation concerning their demands. Till these were complied with there was very little I could do; after they were settled my influence for future measures helpful to Persia would be used as outlined in my speech in Parliament on Thursday.⁽²⁾ Persian Minister made it clear that Persian Gov[ernmen]t desire to concede Russian demands, but are hampered by public opinion that is beyond their control; they therefore desire to have things made easy for them in form.

You should inform M[inister for] F[oreign] A[ffairs].

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was repeated to Tehran (No. 462).]

⁽²⁾ [*v. Parl. Deb., 5th Ser., (House of Commons), Vol. 32, pp. 2598-2608.*]

No. 906.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1198.
51353/40890/11/34.
(No. 379.)
Sir,

*St. Petersburg, D. December 19, 1911.
R. December 23, 1911.*

I had the honour to receive on the 17th instant your telegram No. 834 of the previous day,⁽²⁾ informing me of a further appeal made to you by the Persian Minister on the subject of the Russian demands, and of the reply which you had given. I communicated the substance of your telegram to the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs by a private letter.

Yesterday, as I was prevented by indisposition from leaving the house, Mr. O'Beirne called by appointment on Monsieur Sazonow in my stead and enquired what decision the Russian Government had reached with regard to the second of

⁽¹⁾ [A copy of this despatch was sent to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. immediately preceding document.*]

their demands. Monsieur Sazonow stated that they had decided to accept the formula proposed by the Persian Government with the modification which I had suggested in my conversation with him on the 14th instant,⁽³⁾ so that the concluding passage of the declaration to be made by the Persian Government would now run "would enter into an exchange of views for the purpose of arriving at an understanding, &c."—or would be in terms to that effect. His Excellency added that the necessary instructions on the subject had been sent to Monsieur Poklewsky very shortly after my conversation with him.

Mr. O'Beirne by previous arrangement with me thereupon suggested that it would be extremely desirable that the Russian troops should not be moved beyond Kasvin without a definite intimation having been given to the Persian Government that the advance would take place if within a specified time, such as two or three days, the Russian demands had not been accepted. Mr. O'Beirne urged that an idea seemed to have been gaining ground in Persia that the Russians were reluctant to go beyond Kasvin. The Persian Government thinking that they still had time before them might very possibly now put forward some fresh proposal. If the Russian troops marched from Kasvin on Tehran on the 21st instant without any further notice having been given, critics of Russian policy in England would be sure to say that Persia had not been given fair warning and had been taken unawares. Monsieur Sazonow at first objected that the course proposed would look like delivering another ultimatum to Persia, and remarked that there had been quite ultimatums enough. Mr. O'Beirne said that it would be sufficient for Monsieur Poklewsky to cause some verbal intimation to be made at the Persian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Monsieur Sazonow said that if the intimation was not written, the Persians might say that they had not received it; and Mr. O'Beirne then suggested that the fact of its having been made might be communicated to the press. The Minister of Foreign Affairs eventually said that he must think the suggestion over but that he was inclined to accept it. He thought that the Russian Government might give Persia three or four days' notice dating from the 21st instant. He would, he said, inform His Majesty's Embassy as soon as a decision had been come to.

This afternoon the Minister of Foreign Affairs addressed a private letter to Mr. O'Beirne in which, after referring to another subject, he proceeds as follows: "As to your suggestion of not moving our troops from Kasvin to Tehran, should it come to that without a further notice, I am quite willing to accept it." I had the honour to inform you of this undertaking by my telegram No. 343 of this date.⁽⁴⁾

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

⁽³⁾ [r. *supra*, p. 889, No. 904.]

⁽⁴⁾ [Sir G. Buchanan's telegram (No. 343) of December 19, 1911, D. 5-50 P.M., R. 6-30 P.M., is not reproduced, as the contents are given more fully above. (F.O. 371/1198. 50918/40890/11/34.)]

No. 907.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir G. Barclay.

Private.⁽¹⁾

My dear Barclay,

Foreign Office, December 19, 1911.

I am obliged to you for your letter which I received by the last Messenger.⁽²⁾ You have had, I am afraid, an exceedingly anxious time, and there does not seem very

⁽¹⁾ [Carnock MSS., Vol. VI of 1911.]

⁽²⁾ [This letter cannot be identified with certainty. Sir G. Barclay wrote on November 3 commenting on the general position in Persia and stating that he considered "the situation pretty hopeless." This letter is not reproduced, as it adds nothing of importance to information given elsewhere. Carnock MSS., Vol. VI of 1911.]

much prospect of affairs in Persia resuming a normal situation. It is useless of course for me to speculate as to what the Persian Government may eventually do in regard to the three demands which have been formulated by Russia. Long before this letter reaches you that question will have been settled one way or another. I sincerely trust that even at this last moment the Persians will act reasonably and not attempt to assume an attitude which will inevitably lead to the Russian occupation of Tehran. I cannot conceive anything more foolish on their part, but they do not seem to appreciate what madness it would be for them to decline to agree to the demands which have been presented to them. The bottom of the whole mischief is, I think, largely to be attributed to Stokes and Shuster. The latter gentleman, however capable he may be as a financial administrator, is certainly the most unsuitable man who could have been found for dealing with a country in the position of Persia. If only the Persians would accept the Russian demands and thereby prevent any further advance of Russian troops, I myself do not see any insurmountable difficulty for a real improvement in the situation. I am quite sure that if you and your Russian colleague discussed the measures which could be recommended to the Persian Government, for at any rate establishing some kind of *modus vivendi* for surmounting the immediate difficulties the two Governments, or perhaps I should say the three Governments, could then work together for establishing matters on a more stable footing. If a competent financial adviser from some minor Power could be selected, who would understand that he was to keep in constant touch and frequent consultation with the two Legations, I, personally, would be quite pleased if he were endowed with considerable powers and fairly extensive functions. Furthermore if some kind of force could be organised even under Russian officers and some financial assistance be accorded to the Government I really think that we should be making some steps forward towards getting through the present tangle which is impeding all possible progress. Myself I am of opinion that Russia is honestly desirous of not forcing matters to an extremity, and I think that with the present Russian Government and your Russian colleague at Tehran, we should really be able to co-operate in harmony. I think that with the removal of Stokes and Shuster the path should be much smoother. The whole of the South seems to be in a perfect welter of chaos and anarchy. I almost regret that we did not insist on ourselves organising an efficient force of gendarmerie and not to have given another chance to the Persians to undertake a task which they are clearly incapable of fulfilling. However, as soon as the immediate crisis passes over, we shall await from you and your Russian colleague some proposals in regard to dealing with the future. Of course a great deal will depend on what takes place at Tehran and whether the Mejliss will be dissolved, and whether some sensible and serious Government is established. Of course, if the Russians are compelled to enter Tehran we may be face to face with a very serious situation which may entirely alter the whole aspect of affairs. I should think that a Russian occupation of the capital will have a very serious effect throughout the whole country and may even endanger our interests. It is for that reason I am so anxious that the Persians should not delay any longer in conceding the Russian demands, however unpalatable they may be to them. The Persian Minister here gave us to understand that demand No. 2 was one which they found most difficult to solve. It seems that a formula has now been found which should, I think, satisfy Persian susceptibilities on that point. I daresay that the Russians will not be very hard in regard to the indemnity. The dismissal of Shuster is of course a demand which cannot possibly be withdrawn or modified. . . .⁽³⁾

[Yours, &c.

A. NICOLSON.]

⁽³⁾ [The rest of this letter deals with personal affairs.]

[*ED. NOTE.*—In his telegram (No. 728) of December 22, 1911, D. 11.30 A.M., R. 1.45 P.M., Sir G. Barclay forwarded a telegram of the previous day from the British consul at Tabreez reporting fighting between Russian troops and the natives of the town. Similar incidents were said by the Persian Government to have taken place at Resht (F.O. 371/1198. 51329/40890/11/34.) *v. infra*, pp. 893–4, No. 909. *cp. Siebert*, pp. 136 *sqq.*]

No. 908.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 371/1198.
51344/40890/11/34.
Tel. (No. 731.)

Tehran, December 22, 1911.
D. 5.15 P.M.
R. 9 P.M.

My telegram No. 727.⁽²⁾

Minister for Foreign Affairs has sent his “chef de cabinet” to say that Persian Government have now overcome difficulties in the way of acceding to Russian demands, and have announced to the Russian Legation their compliance on the assurance that the expeditionary force would be immediately withdrawn from Persia and that no new demands would be put forward.

Now that the demands have been accepted, Minister for Foreign Affairs trusts that His Majesty’s Government will give effect to the promises given to Persian Minister that they will lend their good offices for the complete reconciliation and the establishment of friendly and normal relations between Russia and Persia.

Minister for Foreign Affairs declares that Cabinet are determined not to swerve from the attitude of conciliation which they have shown in this matter, and that they are making most strenuous efforts to calm popular indignation, though aggressive action of the Russians in Tabreez and Resht must gravely impede their task.

(Addressed to Foreign Office; sent to India and St. Petersburg.)

MINUTES.

I do not gather from this telegram that the final answer in writing has yet been given and presume that we shall have something more definite.

L. M.

We must wait till we hear that the demands are finally and formally conceded.⁽³⁾

E. G.

⁽¹⁾ [Copies of this telegram were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [Sir G. Barclay’s telegram (No. 727) of December 22, 1911, D. 9.30 A.M., R. 10.30 A.M., reported that the Persian Government had verbally accepted the Russian demands. (F.O. 371/1198. 51211/40890/11/34.)]

⁽³⁾ [Sir G. Barclay’s telegram (No. 739), D. December 24, 1911, 6.30 P.M., R. December 25, 1911, 8 A.M., reported that the Persian Government had handed a note to the Russian Minister accepting the three demands. Mr. Shuster and Mr. Lecoffre had been dismissed. (F.O. 371/1198. 51490/40890/11/34.)]

No. 909.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 96/3/12/34.
(No. 392.)

St. Petersburg, D. December 27, 1911.
R. January 1, 1912.

Sir,
I called on the Minister of Foreign Affairs on the 23rd instant and expressed the hope that, now that the Persian Government had announced their intention of

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the Cabinet. A copy was sent to the Director of Military Operations.]

complying with the Russian demands, the Russian expeditionary force would be recalled, in spite of the regrettable outburst at Resht and Tabriz.

Monsieur Sazonow replied that so far the Persian Government had only given Monsieur Poklewsky a verbal assurance⁽²⁾ but that, when this assurance had been confirmed by a formal written engagement and when Mr. Shuster's dismissal from the Persian Service was an accomplished fact, the troops, which were at present stationed at Kazvin, would be at once recalled. There was, His Excellency proceeded to say, no connection between the question of the recall of these troops and the very serious incidents that had just occurred in the North. The attitude of the Persian Government with regard to the latter had been most correct and, in dealing with the former question, the Russian Government would not allow themselves to be influenced by the attacks made on their troops at Resht and Tabriz. On my remarking that in conflicts of this kind it was not always easy to fix the responsibility for their origin, His Excellency declared that the Russian troops had given no provocation whatsoever and that they had been attacked in the most treacherous manner. Two officers had, he believed, been killed and this was a very serious matter. A detachment of some five or six hundred troops were being hurried up to Tabriz from Julfa and severe retribution would have to be taken on the Fedais. Those of them who turned out to be Russian subjects would probably be hanged, but he could not say what would be done with the rest. He would, he added, let me know as soon as he had any definite news to give me.

Meanwhile the loss, which the Russian troops have sustained during the fighting at Tabriz has deeply moved public opinion here: and the Government is being taken severely to task for its want of foresight in not having dispatched to Persia a force strong enough to render the occurrence of such incidents impossible. The Government is also blamed for having pursued what is termed a vacillating policy in its recent dealings with the Persian Government: and, though that Government is acquitted of all responsibility for the attacks made on the Russian troops, it will, I fear, be very difficult under present circumstances for the Imperial Government to recall the expeditionary force from Kazvin.

Monsieur Sazonow has been too busy to receive me for the last two days, but in a short conversation which I had with him yesterday through the telephone, he once more assured me that he would treat the Tabriz incident as entirely distinct from that of the recall of the expeditionary force. He added, however, that that force could not be recalled till the engagements taken by the Persian Government had assumed a more binding character than they have at present. He also told me, in reply to an enquiry which I had addressed him, that the question of the punishment to be meted out to the Fedais, who were still holding out against the Russian troops at Tabriz, would be left to the military authorities on the spot; and I gathered from the way he said this that it will be an exemplary one.

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

(2) [v. immediately preceding document, notes (2) and (3).]

No. 910.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

St. Petersburg, December 30, 1911.

F.O. 3/3/12/34.

Tel. (No. 356.)

D. 7.35 P.M.

R. 9.15 P.M.

I spoke to Minister for Foreign Affairs this afternoon and expressed hope that Russian troops would soon be withdrawn from Kazvin.

(1) [This telegram was sent to Tehran (as No. 5). Copies were sent to the India Office; to the Director of Military Operations.]

His Excellency assured me that he did not wish to keep them there longer than was necessary now that the Persian Government had accepted three demands in writing. About 1,000 of them had already been transferred to Resht, but it was impossible to withdraw the others as long as there was a danger of any further outbreak of disorders. Russia could not run risk of being again taken by surprise as at Tabreez. He could not therefore give a definite date.

Troops now in the north would, he said, have to remain till order had been completely re-established, and this would be a work of time. He disclaimed, however, any idea of a permanent occupation. He said that severe punishment would have to be meted out to guilty at Tabreez as an example, but on my expressing hope that innocent persons would not be punished with the guilty he said he trusted that this might be avoided.

MINUTES.

To have withdrawn or transferred to Resht 1,000 of the Kasvin force and to refuse to withdraw more, is scarcely in agreement with the 1st sentence in para[graph] 2 of Sir G. Buchanan's telegram 347.⁽²⁾

L. O.

1 January.

No, but the Russian Gov[ernmen]t have said from the beginning that withdrawal would be delayed by disorder and attacks on Russians.

H. N.

R. P. M.

I spoke to Count Benckendorff about this and have recorded what passed in a minute on E.52156/1911.⁽³⁾

I also expressed the hope that discrimination would be used at Tabriz. Count Benckendorff replied that the Viceroy of the Caucasus—Woronzoff-Dashkoff—was a man of extreme moderation and intelligence and humane and if it depended on him, he felt sure that there would be no excesses.

He expressed his gratitude to you for publishing a denial of the atrocities, which he said would have an excellent effect.

L. M.

E. G.

⁽²⁾ [Sir G. Buchanan's telegram (No. 347) of December 23, 1911, D. 8.14 P.M., R. 8 P.M., stated that the Russian attitude would not be affected by the recent incidents, but that the expeditionary force would be withdrawn as soon as Mr. Shuster's dismissal had actually taken place. (F.O. 371/1198. 51477/40890/11/34A.)]

⁽³⁾ [Sir G. Barclay's telegram (No. 761) of December 28, 1911, D. 10.20 A.M., R. 5.50 P.M., reported that the Persian Government had informed Mr. Shuster of his dismissal on December 25, but that he could not actually leave until his successor had been appointed. A minute on the document by Mr. Mallet states that he had spoken to Count Benckendorff on December 31, in the sense indicated in a previous minute by Sir Edward Grey. The latter had directed him to inform Count Benckendorff that it "seems reasonable" that Mr. Shuster should await his successor and "that I quite see the difficulty of total withdrawal at once, but that it is most desirable to do something to encourage Persian Gov[ernmen]t after compliance with Russian demands, the more so as occurrences at Tabriz have apparently forced action upon Russia there though present Persian Gov[ernmen]t was not to blame." Mr. Mallet stated that since this minute was written Sir G. Buchanan had reported that 1,000 men had left Kasvin, "so that Count Benckendorff put the wording of his telegram to M. Sazonov rather differently and said that you had been glad to hear that 1,000 men had already left Kasvin and hoped that the process would continue." (F.O. 371/1198. 52156/40890/11/34.)]

No. 911.

Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

Tehran, December 31, 1911.

F.O. 9/3/12/34.

D. 2 P.M.

Tel. (No. 776.) Confidential.

R. 5 P.M.

Your telegram No. 484.⁽²⁾I have little to add to my telegrams Nos. 666⁽³⁾ and 770.⁽⁴⁾

I have never found Mornard other than sincere and upright in his dealings with me, though I cannot vouch for his having any exceptional degree of probity. His disfavour in certain quarters is largely due to his known Russian sympathies.

I know of no available candidate from minor Powers except Mornard and Oudendyck, and latter is on leave.

I venture to point out that a man of too strong character might lead us into the same difficulties as Shuster.⁽⁵⁾

MINUTES.

I discussed this question last night with Count Benckendorff. The principal objection to Mornard is Persian opposition and we thought it worth while to find out more about Oudendijk. Sir Alan Johnstone who was also at the Benckendorff's was therefore consulted and I asked him, on his return to the Hague to-day, to report as to Oudendijk—M. V. Swinderen had already told him—not à propos of this app[ointmen]t—that he is one of their best men. I have added to your telegram to Sir G. Barclay the words "we are endeavouring to find out more about Oudendijk."

L. M.

E. G.

There must not be much delay: the best plan would be to let Russian Gov[ernmen]t choose between Mornard and Oudendijk.

E. G.

⁽¹⁾ [This telegram was sent to St Petersburg (as No. 8).]

⁽²⁾ [Sir Edward Grey's telegram (No. 484) of December 30, 1911, D. 2.20 P.M., stated that the Persian Government was opposed to the appointment of M. Mornard. Sir Edward Grey asked Sir G. Barclay's views on the matter. (F.O. 371/1198. 52328/40890/11/34.)]

⁽³⁾ [Sir G. Barclay's telegram (No. 666) of December 7, 1911, D. 3.5 P.M., R. 4.40 P.M., stated that the Russian Minister was strongly in favour of the appointment of M. Mornard, and commented "I do not know that he would be more unpalatable to Persians than any other nominee of the two Powers. (F.O. 371/1198. 49058/40890/11/34.)]

⁽⁴⁾ [Sir G. Barclay's telegram (No. 770) of December 30, 1911, D. 1 P.M., R. 12.10 P.M., stated that he thought he had gone too far in acting with his Russian and Belgian colleagues to take the initiative in proposing an alternative to M. Mornard. (F.O. 371/1198. 52312/40890/11/34.)]

⁽⁵⁾ [Mr. Shuster left Tehran on January 11, 1912.]

No. 912.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.⁽¹⁾Private.⁽²⁾

My dear Buchanan,

St. Petersburg, January 2, 1912.

I agree that an audience with the Emperor would be best later on,⁽³⁾ unless he asks for it.

We cannot for the moment press the Russians much about Persia after the untoward events at Tabriz, but I hope they will be as lenient as possible. There

⁽¹⁾ [This letter is endorsed as having been sent to the Prime Minister and to Sir A. Nicolson.]

⁽²⁾ [Grey MSS., Vol. 35.]

⁽³⁾ [On December 28, 1911, Sir G. Buchanan wrote a private letter to Sir Edward Grey in which he said that the Emperor was expected back shortly and enquired whether he should ask for an Audience. He suggested that it would be better to wait until after the visit of the Parliamentary deputation in January. *cp. infra*, p. 900, No. 915, note ⁽³⁾. Grey MSS., Vol. 35.]

is a strong feeling here that they have pushed the Persians too hard. Our public opinion would not approve an enlargement of the understanding at this moment: if the Russians can pull things round in northern Persia so as to get a Persian gendarmerie organized, in which they can have confidence enough to withdraw all or the bulk of their troops, it will create a favourable impression. But this is a difficult and delicate business and will take time. Recent events have made people here feel that Russian methods are not our methods, and even those people who sincerely desire to be on good terms with Russia shrink from being committed to co-operation that might imply responsibility for Russian action.⁽⁴⁾

Yours sincerely,
E. GREY.

⁽⁴⁾ [A postscript to this letter refers to the Malacka case.]

No. 913.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.⁽¹⁾

F.O. 3883/3/12/34.

(No. 20.)

Sir,

St. Petersburg, D. January 17, 1912.

R. January 29, 1912.

At the usual reception of the Diplomatic Body by the Emperor on New Year's Day, I conveyed to His Majesty The King's congratulations and good wishes, adding that the last commands which The King had been pleased to give me on the eve of his departure for India were to take the first opportunity of assuring His Majesty that there was nothing which The King had so much at heart as the maintenance of the closest relations with Russia.⁽²⁾ I subsequently succeeded in turning the conversation to Persian affairs and repeated to His Majesty much of what I had said to Monsieur Sazonow, as reported in my immediately preceding despatch on the subject of the ex-Shah.⁽³⁾

The cordial manner in which the Emperor spoke of the Anglo-Russian Understanding left nothing to be desired; and His Majesty warmly reciprocated The King's wishes for its maintenance. His Majesty also spoke of the approaching English visit with evident satisfaction. With regard to Persia, the Emperor said that it was incumbent on the two Governments to give the Persian Government every assistance in their power by providing them with capable foreign advisers. He had, His Majesty continued, seen the joint programme which had been drawn up by Monsieur Poklewsky and Sir George Barclay⁽⁴⁾; and the principles which it laid down met with His approval. Monsieur Sazonow had already told him that you could never consent to recognise the ex-Shah, and He quite understood your attitude on this question. On my informing the Emperor of the action which Monsieur Sazonow proposed to take, His Majesty expressed his approval.

⁽¹⁾ [This despatch is endorsed as having been sent to the King and to the Cabinet; and as having been seen at Berlin. A copy was sent to the Director of Military Operations.]

⁽²⁾ [*cp. supra*, pp. 847-8, No. 875.]

⁽³⁾ [Sir G. Buchanan's despatch (No. 19), D. January 17, R. January 29, 1912, recorded a conversation with M. Sazonov in which the attitude of the two Governments to the ex-Shah was discussed. It is not reproduced, as it does not add substantially to the subject of the present chapter. (F.O. 3882/3/12/34.)]

⁽⁴⁾ [Sir G. Barclay's telegram (No. 29) of January 10, 1912, D. 2-30 P.M., R. 4 P.M., transmitted the identic suggestions of M. Poklevski-Koziell and himself. The principal suggestions were for both Governments to support existing Persian Government and to refuse recognition of ex-Shah; Persian Government to conform to principles of Anglo-Russian Convention and to dismiss irregular troops; loan proposed for gendarmerie and small army to garrison larger towns; certain changes in the Constitution limiting powers of Medjliss and extending those of Shah. This telegram was sent to St. Petersburg (as No. 27). Copies were sent to the India Office and to the Director of Military Operations. (F.O. 1421/3/12/34.)]

The Emperor then proceeded to say that the Persian Government was so weak and the country in such a state of anarchy that order could never be restored without the assistance of Russian troops in the North and of British troops in the South. He had seen with regret that the Persian Committee in London, as well as the "Daily Graphic" and other Papers, had recently indulged in attacks on Russia and had cast suspicion on the sincerity of the assurances which His Government had given. We might, however, rest assured that, when He gave his word that Russia would not annex any portion of Persian territory, that word would not be broken.

I told The Emperor that I had reported to you the categorical assurances which Monsieur Kokovtsoff had given me on the subject, and assured His Majesty that His Majesty's Government had not for a moment doubted their sincerity. There was, I added, a tendency among the Parties belonging to the Extreme Left in England and to the Extreme Right in Russia to criticise the Anglo-Russian Understanding, and I ventured to think that the language employed in the "Zemshchina" and other Reactionary Papers in Russia had been more violent and more openly hostile than that of the Radical Press in England. The essential thing, however, was that the Anglo-Russian Understanding should be supported by the two Governments and by general public opinion in the two countries.

His Majesty cordially agreed and said that neither Government should attach undue importance to what was said by the extremists on the other side.

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

No. 914.

Sir Edward Grey to Dr. Hodgkin.

Private.⁽¹⁾

Dear Dr. Hodgkin,

Foreign Office, January 23, 1912.

Of course I should not demur to your right to express an opinion on public affairs and I appreciate the courtesy of having written to tell me what your opinion is⁽²⁾ but I hope you won't mind my saying that I think you approach the Anglo-Russian agreement from a wrong point of view. Previous to that agreement it was our policy to head back Russia in every direction. We did it in the Crimean War, we did it in the time of Lord Beaconsfield and we did it in recent years in the Far East. For years I have held that this was a mistaken policy that it would be a better way to come to an agreement with Russia by which she should not acquire influence or use what influence she had to disturb our Indian frontier. That was the *fons et origo* of the Anglo-Russian agreement. At the time when that agreement was made, Russian influence was already predominant in the north of Persia and the Shah was her creature. It was no part of the Anglo-Russian agreement to destroy Russian influence or to extend our responsibilities to protect Persia. I would never have been a party to committing this country to extension of responsibility in that direction. The Persians revolted against the Shah and Russia, relying on the fact that we should not interfere in northern Persia and exploit the situation to her disadvantage, remained passive while the Shah, whom she has nursed, was driven out. A constitutional party succeeded to power, they set to work to destroy Russian influence in northern Persia and to worry the Russians out of it. The result was inevitable; they worried the Russians further in; but for us to have supported the Persians against the Russians in the north of Persia would have been

⁽¹⁾ [Grey MSS., Vol. 69.]

⁽²⁾ [Dr. T. Hodgkin's letter stated his disagreement with Sir Edward Grey's policy with regard to Germany, Russia and Persia. It did not seem worth reproducing. Grey MSS., Vol. 69.]

contrary to the whole spirit of the Anglo-Russian agreement and would have been perfectly futile unless we had been prepared to make war upon Russia in Europe, for if you look at the map you will see how impossible it is that we could interfere by force at Tehran which is quite out of our reach. Had it not been for the Anglo-Russian agreement the Russians would either have interfered to keep the Shah on the throne or their troops would have been in Tehran long before this. I do not believe this country would have gone to war to prevent that and I should have thought it deplorable if it did.

I have said so much because I think these are considerations which are left entirely out of account by the opponents of the Anglo-Russian agreement and which perhaps you have not fully considered. If you have already taken them all into account I must apologise for thrusting them unnecessarily upon you.

I ought to add that since the Anglo-Russian agreement was made (it does not apply only to Persia) the Russians have scrupulously abstained from doing anything prejudicial to the security of our Indian frontier. If the agreement is to be declared at an end we must prepare to put the defence of our Indian frontier on a war footing and sooner or later there must be war between Russia and ourselves over these Asiatic questions.

[Yours, &c.
E. GREY.]

No. 915.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir A. Nicolson.

Private.⁽¹⁾

My dear Nicolson,

St. Petersburg, January 24, 1912.

I was delighted to get a letter from you by last bag,⁽²⁾ as I had no idea that you had returned to the Foreign Office and only trust that the curtailment of your holiday will not prejudice your complete recovery.

I feel more hopeful as regards the continued co-operation of the two Governments in Persia and trust that during the last three weeks things have taken a turn for the better. In spite of the fact that Sazonow has not yet carried out the assurances which he gave me respecting the recall of the Kasvin troops, I am convinced that he is sincerely anxious to re-establish correct and normal relations with Persia, and that he will recall those troops as soon as he can do so without provoking an outcry on the part of the Russian Press. Public opinion here has been considerably aroused by the mutilations inflicted on the Russian killed and by the stories of tortures applied to the Russian wounded: and, as it is, Sazonow's policy both in Persia and Mongolia has been attacked for not going far enough. Were any fresh troubles to break out after that the troops had been actually recalled, his position would become very difficult; and it is for this reason, I think, that he still hesitates to recall them. After what the Emperor said to me on New Year's Day we may rest assured that there will be no annexation of Persian territory; but until some gendarmerie force under the control of Russian officers is created to maintain order along the caravan routes between the Russian frontier and Tabriz, that town will remain in the occupation of the Russians. Louis spoke to me on this subject yesterday and said that the general feeling prevailing among all classes of Russians with whom he had spoken was that we in England underestimated the interests which Russia had in seeing that order was maintained in the provinces adjoining her frontier. He added that he hoped that we would take this into account

⁽¹⁾ [Carnock MSS., Vol. I of 1912.]

⁽²⁾ [Sir A. Nicolson's letter of January 17, 1912, is not reproduced. It refers to British difficulties in South Persia, but does not contribute substantially to the subject of the present chapter. Carnock MSS., Vol. I of 1912.]

as he did not believe that Russia harboured any aggressive designs against Persia. I told him, as I had told Sazonow only the other day, that we had equally important interests in the South and that Russia's recent action had contributed to render our position there still more difficult by inflaming the fanaticism of the tribes.

The Emperor evidently expected that we would follow Russia's example and send a force large enough to coerce the tribes. I explained to Sazonow how much more serious a task this would be than that which Russia had undertaken and told him that I doubted very much whether an expedition on a scale large enough to effect our purpose would be sanctioned by public opinion either at home or in India. I did not tell him that we had decided to withdraw our Consuls down to the coast, as I only know of this decision from your private letter. I confess that I am rather anxious as to the effect which that decision may have both here and in Persia, as I fear that it will be regarded as a sign of weakness on our part. The suspension of our trade will, moreover, be not only a considerable loss to us, but will also seriously affect the yield of the Southern Customs. This will, in turn, I imagine, react on the prospects of the proposed Persian Loan, which both Governments agree in thinking of primary importance. . . .⁽³⁾

Yours ever,

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

⁽³⁾ [The rest of the letter deals with Press reports and social activities at St. Petersburg in connection with the official visit to St. Petersburg of the Speaker of the House of Commons.]

APPENDIX.

Overture of Turkey to Great Britain, June 1918.

[*ED. NOTE.*—The following papers relating to a renewed Turkish overture to Great Britain should be read in conjunction with those printed in *Gooch & Temperley*, Vol. IX (I), pp. 779–81, App. IV, which described the similar approach of October–November 1911.]

Note by Sir Edward Grey.

F.O. 27117/27117/13/44.

Foreign Office, June 12, 1913.

The Turkish Ambassador tells me that a proposal for a defensive Alliance was made to us by Turkey about the time of the war with Italy about Tripoli, and that we gave an answer that the time was not opportune. He now wishes to recur to the subject.

I have told him that I must see the papers again.

I wish the Department to let me have what there is.

E. G.

12th June, 1913.

Memorandum by Sir L. Mallet

F.O. 28098/27117/13/44.

June 19, 1913.

I assume that it is to the interest of Great Britain that the integrity of what remains of the Turkish Empire should be maintained—a division of the Asiatic provinces into spheres of interest could not benefit us, but would seriously affect the balance of power on the Mediterranean, our position in Egypt, in the Persian Gulf, to say nothing of India, and might bring about a European war.

All the Powers, until quite recently, have been unanimous in this view. The suggestion thrown out by Prince Lichnowsky to you for partition into spheres of interest and Herr von Gwinner's remarks to Sir H. B. Smith are indications of a kind which cannot be ignored and which require careful consideration on our part, although it is not clear how far they were seriously intended or whether His Highness spoke on instructions. The present communication from the Turkish Ambassador in reality raises the whole question upon which I venture to offer the following observations. The communication must be read in connexion with the application made by His Excellency on October 31st, 1912[1], in which the Turkish Government said that they were disposed to enter into "pourparlers" for the conclusion of an alliance with Great Britain alone, or to participate eventually in the entente actually existing between her and the other Powers (France and Russia).

On that occasion Tefik Pasha was informed that the moment was not opportune to discuss such a question, as hostilities between Turkey and Italy were still in progress but His Excellency was assured that His Majesty's Government highly appreciated the friendly sentiments of the Turkish Government and shared their desire that the relations between the two countries should be sincerely cordial and that the Ottoman Empire "should enter upon an era of prosperity and progress."

The same reason no longer exists for deferring a decision, which so far, at any rate, as an alliance with Great Britain is concerned cannot fail, I think, to be in the negative. If other Powers with confessed ambitions in the near East did not exist or were not strong enough to make their voices heard, there would be something very attractive in undertaking the regeneration of the Turkish Empire—which we have practically been invited to do—in devoting ourselves to the reform of the administration, the improvement of the condition of the people and the commercial development of a great and rich country. In a short time there is little doubt that British Administration could convert a decaying Power into a strong ally, who owing to her geographical position would be a source of strength to us. But this is not within practical politics and if Turkey is to be reformed it will have to be with the assistance of all the Great Powers.

An alliance with Turkey would in present circumstances unite Europe against us and be a source of weakness and danger to ourselves and to Turkey. The 2nd part of the Turkish proposal—namely that which relates to the inclusion of Turkey in the Triple Entente is a question on which His Majesty's Government will, I imagine, wish to know the views of the French and Russian Governments. To a certain extent the criticism which is applicable to an alliance with Great Britain alone is also applicable to the inclusion of Turkey in the Triple Entente. Such a policy might arouse the jealousy of Germany, Austria and Italy and although Turkey, having lost nearly all her European and outlying African possessions is

perhaps not now so vulnerable to the Triple Alliance, it is doubtful whether Germany would not regard an event of this nature as almost in the nature of a challenge from the Triple Entente to the Triple Alliance. Subject to a discussion with France and Russia, I should be disinclined to encourage Turkey to lean exclusively upon the Triple Entente. I do not however think that we can be satisfied with a purely negative attitude which might throw Turkey into the arms of the Triple Alliance who would conceivably not be so reluctant to entertain her requests.

I have referred at the beginning of this minute to the importance, which appears to be of almost a vital character, of maintaining the integrity of the Asiatic possession of the Turkish Empire. Turkey's way of assuring her independence is by an alliance with us or by an understanding with the Triple Entente. A less risky method would be by a treaty of Declaration binding all the Powers to respect the independence and integrity of the present Turkish dominion, which might go as far as neutralisation, and by participation by all the Great Powers in financial control and the application of reforms.

[L. Mallet.]

MINUTE.

Sir A. Nicolson should see. I think we shall have to refer as a declaration of policy to a speech that I made in the House a short time ago about the future of Asiatic Turkey⁽¹⁾ and to say that the best course would be that this policy should be adopted by all the Powers especially by France, Russia and Germany as well as ourselves who have special interests such as commercial or frontier interests as regards Asiatic Turkey and that we propose to discuss the matter with them

E. G.

(We alone can certainly not put Turkey on her feet: she would when her fears subsided resist efforts at reform and play off one Power against another unless all were united.)

[E. G.]

Sir Edward Grey to Tewfik Pasha.

F.O. 27117/27117/13/44.

Secret.

Your Highness,

Foreign Office, July 2, 1913.

In the course of a conversation which I had the honour to hold with you on the 12th ult[imo], you referred to a proposal made to H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] by the Imperial Ottoman Gov[ernment] during the late Turco-Italian war for a defensive alliance between this country and Turkey, to which I replied at the time that the moment was not opportune for the conclusion of such an arrangement.

Your Highness gave me to understand that you wished to recur to this proposal and I asked for time to consider the question.

Y[our] H[ighness] is already well aware of the complete and sincere goodwill and sympathy felt for Turkey by the people of this country and by His Majesty's Government and of their strong desire to see tranquillity, order, justice, good gov[ernment] and a sound financial system firmly established in the dominions of H[is] I[mperial] M[ajesty] the Sultan and His authority consolidated throughout his Empire.

H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] feel convinced that these objects cannot be attained by a defensive alliance between Turkey and any one Power alone but require for their realisation the whole-hearted co-operation of the Ottoman Gov[ernment] with the Gov[ernments] of all the Great Powers, and particularly of those who, like Great Britain, have special interests in the Turkish Empire, by reason either of their geographical position or of commercial enterprises in which their subjects are concerned there.

The policy of H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] towards Turkey, summarised above, was recently set forth at greater length in a speech which I delivered in the House of Commons on May 29th⁽¹⁾ and it is my hope and the wish of H[is] M[ajesty's] G[overnment] that this policy, on the successful pursuit of which, I feel sure, the future strength and prosperity of the Ottoman Empire depends, may be adopted by all the Powers, with whom I intend to discuss it.

[I am, &c.]

E. G[REY].

⁽¹⁾ [v. *Parl. Deb.*, 5th Ser., (House of Commons), Vol. 53, pp. 390-2.]

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(Nos. 708-9), 689-90 (No. 712), 691 (No. 714), 695-6 (Nos. 718-9), 698-9 (No. 721), 701-2 (No. 723), 705 (No. 726), 705-6 (No. 728), 707-8 (No. 730), 710-2 (No. 733), 712-4 (No. 735), 716-20 (Nos. 739-41), 721-2 (Nos. 742-3), 746 (No. 748), 748-9 (Nos. 752-3), 754 (No. 760), 755 (No. 762), 757 (No. 766), 758-60 (Nos. 768-9), 767-8 (No. 780), 774-7 (Nos. 788-9), 778-80 (No. 792), 783-5 (Nos. 797-9), 786-7 (No. 803), 789-93 (No. 805), 794-5 (No. 807), 798-9 (No. 812), 801-2 (No. 816), 803-5 (No. 818), 806-7 (No. 821), 827-30 (Nos. 853-4), 832-3 (Nos. 857-8), 834-6 (No. 860), 837-8 (No. 862), 840-1 (No. 866), 842-3 (Nos. 868-9), 846-55 (Nos. 875-6), 856-60 (Nos. 879-82), 861-2 (No. 886), 866-70 (Nos. 893-4), 872-3 (No. 897), 875-6 (No. 899), 880-9 (Nos. 901-4), 890-1 (No. 906), 893-5 (Nos. 909-10), 897 (No. 913).

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Conversation with General Dimitriev, 291-2 (No. 324).

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Conversation with M. Kokovtsov, 594-5 (No. 632), 829-30 (No. 854), 847-9 (No. 875), 857 (No. 879).

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Conversation with M. Stolypin, 683-4 (No. 706), 685-6 (No. 708).

Conversation with M. Timiriazev, 633 (No. 661).

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To Sir A. Nicolson, 420 (No. 469), 576-7 (No. 619), 585 (No. 624), 597-8 (No. 635), 611-3 (No. 644), 634-6 (No. 662), 653-5 (No. 681), 678-9 (No. 701), 703-4 (No. 724), 723 (No. 744), 780 (No. 793), 793-4 (No. 806), 899-900 (No. 915).

BUNSEN, MR. (since 1905, SIR) M. DE, Secretary of British Embassy at Paris, 1902-5; British Minister at Lisbon, 1905-6; Ambassador at Madrid, 1906-13; at Vienna, 1913-4.

To Sir E. Grey, 71-2 (No. 87), 82 (No. 98), 84-5 (No. 100), 112 (No. 126), 124-5 (No. 140), 169-61 (No. 176), 167-8 (No. 184), 173-5 (No. 188), 181 (No. 195), 188-9 (No. 202), 201-2 (No. 215), 258-9 (No. 279), 289-90 (No. 323), 296 (No. 328), 310-1 (No. 346), 317-8 (No. 354), 320-1 (No. 357), 359-60 (No. 404), 398 (No. 449).

Conversation with Count Berchtold, 72 (No. 87), 82 (No. 98), 84-5 (No. 100), 91 (No. 106), 112 (No. 126), 181 (No. 195), 322-3 (No. 358).

Conversation with the Marquis Carloti di Riparbella, 181 (No. 195).

Conversation with M. Dumaine, 72 (No. 87), 125 (No. 140), 160 (No. 176).

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Conversation with Hussein Hilmi Pasha, 72 (No. 87), 161 (No. 176), 167-8 (No. 184), 174 (No. 188), 188-9 (No. 202), 201-2 (No. 215), 322 (No. 358), 359 (No. 404).

BUNSEN, MR. (since 1905, SIR) M. DE—(continued).

Conversation with M. Salabačev, 296 (No. 328), 311 (No. 346).

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Conversation with M. Yovanović, 124–5 (No. 140), 175 (No. 188), 289–90 (No. 323), 317–8 (No. 354), 322 (No. 358), 336–7 (No. 374).

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BURNEX, SIR CECIL, Vice-Admiral of the British Navy, Senior Naval Officer of International Fleet blockading coasts of Montenegro and Albania, 1913.

And Admirals' Commission at Scutari, 1 (No. 1), 11 (No. 14), 16 (No. 21), 17–8 (*ed. note*).

CAMBON, M. JULES, French Ambassador at Madrid, 1902–7; at Berlin, 1907–14.

Conversation with Sir E. Goschen, 605 (No. 640).

Conversation with Herr von Kiderlen-Waechter, 558 (No. 607), 567 (No. 613), 587 (No. 627), 747 (No. 749).

Conversation with M. Kokovtsov, 339–40 (No. 378).

CAMBON, M. PAUL, French Ambassador at London, 1898–1920.

Conversation with Count Benckendorff, 692–3 (No. 716).

Conversation with Sir E. Grey, 50 (No. 58), 60 (No. 72), 94 (No. 109), 101 (No. 115), 105 (No. 121), 114 (Nos. 128–9), 130 (No. 144), 141 (No. 155), 146 (No. 161, *min.*), 151–2 (No. 166), 180–1 (No. 194), 217–8 (No. 231), 223 (No. 239), 241–2 (No. 260), 260–1 (No. 282), 348 (No. 390), 364–5 (No. 411), 387 (No. 436), 424 (No. 475), 434 (No. 485), 443 (No. 496), 460 (No. 516), 464–5 (No. 525), 548 (No. 594), 624–5 (No. 654), 692–3 (No. 716), 705 (No. 727), 750 (No. 755).

Conversation with Sir A. Nicolson, 339–40 (No. 378), 346 (No. 386), 434 (No. 485), 443–4 (No. 497), 692–3 (No. 716).

CARLOTTI DI RIPARBELLA, MARQUIS, Italian Minister at Cettinje, 1906–8; at Athens, 1908–13; Ambassador at St. Petersburg, 1913–8.

Conversation with Sir M. de Bunsen, 181 (No. 195).

CARNEGIE, MR. L. D., Councillor of Embassy at British Embassy at Vienna, 1907–8 (sometimes *Chargé d'Affaires*); at Paris, 1908–13 (sometimes *Chargé d'Affaires*).

To Sir E. Grey, 462–3 (No. 522), 582 (No. 622).

CARTWRIGHT, MR. (since 1908, SIR) FAIRFAX, Councillor of Embassy at British Embassy at Madrid, 1905–6 (sometimes *Chargé d'Affaires*); Minister at Munich and Stuttgart, 1906–8; Ambassador at Vienna, 1908–13.

To Sir E. Grey, 12–3 (No. 17), 22 (No. 28), 25 (No. 32), 40 (No. 47), 49 (No. 57), 58 (No. 68), 497 (No. 556), 606 (No. 641), 636 (No. 663), 773 (No. 785).

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CASSEL, SIR ERNEST, British Financier.

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CHILHAUD-DUMAINE, M. ALBERT, French Ambassador at Vienna, 1912–4.

Conversation with Sir M. de Bunsen, 72 (No. 87), 125 (No. 140), 160 (No. 176).

CHIROL, MR. (later SIR) VALENTINE, Director of the Foreign Department of *The Times*, 1899–1912.

Conversation with Sir L. Mallet, 472–3 (No. 535, *min.*).

CHURCHILL, MR. G. P., Oriental Secretary to the British Legation at Tehran, 1903–19.

Conversation with Mr. Shuster, 763 (No. 774).

CLÉMENT-SIMON, M. LOUIS F., Secretary at French Legation at Belgrade, 1911–4 (sometimes *Chargé d'Affaires*).

Conversation with Mr. Crackanthorpe, 286 (No. 318).

CLERK, MR. (later SIR) GEORGE R., Clerk in British Foreign Office, 1907-10, 1912-3; Acting First Secretary at Constantinople, 1910-2; Senior Clerk in Foreign Office, 1913-9; Private Secretary to Lord Curzon, 1919; Minister at Prague, 1919-26; Ambassador at Angora, 1926-33; at Brussels, 1933-4; at Paris, 1934- .
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COANDA, GENERAL C., of the Rumanian Army.
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H.M. KING CONSTANTINE I, Crown Prince of Greece, King of Greece, 1913-7
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CRACKANTHORPE, MR. D. E. M., 2nd Secretary at British Embassy at Vienna, 1906-8; 1st Secretary, 1908-9; at Belgrade, 1912-5 (sometimes *Chargé d'Affaires*).
To Sir E. Grey, 2-6 (Nos. 3-6), 6-9 (Nos. 8-11), 10 (No. 13), 11 (No. 15), 13-6 (Nos. 18-20), 21 (No. 25), 23-4 (No. 30), 26-9 (Nos. 33-4), 31-2 (No. 37), 35 (No. 41), 37-9 (No. 44-5), 41-4 (Nos. 49-50), 45-6 (Nos. 52-3), 54-5 (No. 63), 280 (No. 311), 285-6 (No. 318), 287 (No. 320), 294-5 (No. 326), 298 (Nos. 330-1), 299-301 (Nos. 333-5), 302 (No. 337), 303 (No. 339), 306-10 (Nos. 344-5), 312-3 (Nos. 348-9), 314-5 (No. 351), 316-7 (No. 353), 337 (No. 375).
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Conversation with M. Šainović, 312-3 (No. 348), 314-5 (No. 351).
Conversation with M. Spalajković, 6-7 (No. 8), 8-9 (Nos. 9-11), 15 (No. 20), 23 (No. 30).
Conversation with M. Stefanović, 39 (No. 45), 41-3 (No. 49), 299 (No. 333).
Conversation with Ritter von Storck, 31 (No. 37), 35 (No. 41).
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CRAWFORD, SIR RICHARD F., British Adviser to Imperial Ottoman Ministry of Finance, 1911-4.
 224 (No. 240), 257 (No. 278).
Conversation with Sir L. Mallet, 522 (No. 573).
Invitation to be an Inspector-General of N.E. Anatolia, 518 (No. 569), 520 (No. 570).
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CROWE, MR. (since 1911, SIR) EYRE, Senior Clerk, British Foreign Office, 1906-12; Assistant Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1912-20; Permanent Under-Secretary, 1920-5.
To Mr. H. Lamb, 121-2 (No. 138).
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Conversation with M. de Etter, 183-4 (No. 198), 393 (No. 443, *min.*), 400-1 (No. 452), 402 (*ed. note*), 404 (No. 454).
Conversation with M. de Fleuriat, 87 (*ed. note*), 138 (No. 152).
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Conversation with M. Gennadius, 176-7 (No. 189, *min.*).
Conversation with M. Gruić, 9-10 (No. 12, *min.*).
Conversation with the Marquis Imperiali, 68 (No. 82), 87 (*ed. note*).
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Conversation with Prince Lichnowsky, 87 (*ed. note*).
Conversation with Count Mensdorff, 29 (*ed. note*), 33-4 (No. 38, *min.*).
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Conversation with Count Trauttmansdorff, 68 (No. 82), 87 (*ed. note*).
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CROZIER, M., French Minister at Copenhagen, 1902-7; Ambassador at Vienna, 1907-12.
Conversation with Sir F. Cartwright, 644 (No. 671).

- CURZON OF KEDLESTON, 1ST BARON (since 1921, 1st MARQUESS), British Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1895-8; Viceroy and Governor-General of India, 1898-1905; Lord Privy Seal, 1915-6; Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1919-24; Lord President of the Council, 1916-9, 1924-5.
And Anglo-Russian Convention, 874 (No. 898)
- CZERNIN VON UND ZU CHUDENITZ, OTTO, COUNT, Secretary of Austro-Hungarian Legation at Sofia, 1907-9; at Stuttgart, 1909-10; at Bucharest, 1910-2; Councillor of Embassy at St. Petersburg, 1912-4 (sometimes *Chargé d'Affaires*).
Conversation with M. Neratov, 66 (No. 78).
- CZERNIN VON UND ZU CHUDENITZ, OTTOKAR, COUNT, Austro-Hungarian Minister at Bucharest, 1913-6.
Appointment of, as Minister at Bucharest, 330-1 (No. 367).
- DANE, SIR LOUIS WILLIAM, Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign Department, 1903-8; Lieutenant-Governor, Punjab, 1908-13.
 519 (No. 569, *min.*).
- DANEV, DR. S., President of the Bulgarian Sobranjé, 1912-3; Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, 1913; Delegate to the Peace Conference at London, 1912-3.
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- DELCASSÉ, M. THÉOPHILE, French Minister of Foreign Affairs, 1898-1905; Minister of Marine, 1911-3; Ambassador at St Petersburg, 1913-4.
Conversation with Sir F. Cartwright, 587 (No. 627).
Conversation with M. Sazonov, 415 (No. 465).
- DEMIDOV, PRINCE DI SAN DONATA ELIM PAVLOVICH, Russian Minister at Athens, 1912-7.
Conversation with Sir F. Elliot, 239-40 (No. 258)
- DERING, MR. (since 1917, SIR) HERBERT G., Councillor of Embassy at British Embassy, Rome, 1911-5 (sometimes *Chargé d'Affaires*).
To Sir E. Grey, 30-1 (No. 35), 56-8 (Nos. 65-7), 136 (No. 151), 145-8 (Nos. 161-2).
Conversation with Mehmed Naby Bey, 145-6 (No. 161), 147-8 (No. 162).
Conversation with the Marquis di San Giuliano, 30-1 (No. 35), 56-8 (Nos. 65-7), 136 (No. 151), 147 (No. 162).
- DIAMANDI, M., Rumanian Deputy, 1914.
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- DILLON, DR. E. J., British Journalist.
Conversation with Sir A. Nicolson, 600 (No. 637).
Conversation with M. Venizelos, 268 (No. 295).
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- DIMITRIEV, GENERAL R., Bulgarian Minister at St. Petersburg, 1913-4; Commander-in-Chief of the Bulgarian Army, 1913.
Conversation with Sir G. Buchanan, 291-2 (No. 324).
Conversation with M. Sazonov, 302-3 (No. 338).
- DJEMAL BEY, Turkish Military Governor at Constantinople, 1913; Minister of Public Works, 1913-4.
Conversation with Sir L. Mallet, 168-71 (No. 185), 224-5 (No. 241).
- DJEMAL PASHA, MAJOR-GENERAL AHMED, Turkish Minister for Marine, 1913-4.
Conversation with Sir L. Mallet, 252-3 (No. 273).
- DJEVAD BEY, Councillor of Turkish Embassy at London, 1908-13 (sometimes *Chargé d'Affaires*).
Conversation with Sir L. Mallet, 191 (No. 204).
- DOBROVIĆ, M., Chef de Cabinet to Ferdinand, King of the Bulgarians, 1912-3.
Conversation with Sir H. Bax-Ironside, 306 (No. 343).
Conversation with M. Savinski, 329 (No. 366).
- DOUGHTY-WYLIE, LIEUTENANT-COLONEL CHARLES H. M., British Consul at Addis Ababa, 1909-12 (in charge of Legation, May 1911-January 1912), Representative on the International Commission for the delimitation of the Southern frontier of Albania, 1913.
Armenian massacres at Adana, 509 (No. 567, note ⁽¹⁾).
British representative on Southern Albanian Boundary Commission, 7 (ed. note), 64 (No. 75, note ⁽²⁾).
- DOUMER, M. PAUL, French Senator, President of the French Chamber, 1905-6.
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- DOUMERGUE, M. GASTON, French Senator, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, 1913-4.
Conversation with Sir F. Bertie, 226-7 (No. 244), 388 (No. 438), 416-7 (No. 466).
Conversation with M. Isvolski, 388 (No. 438).
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- DROGHEDA (HENRY C. PONSONBY MOORE), 10TH EARL OF, Clerk in the British Foreign Office, 1907-14.
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- DUMAINE, M. ALBERT CHILHAUD.
 (v. sub CHILHAUD-DUMAINE.)
- ELLIOT, SIR F. E. H., British Minister at Athens, 1903-17.
To Sir E. Grey, 73-5 (Nos. 89-90), 103 (No. 118), 107-9 (Nos. 122-3), 185-6 (No. 200), 196 (No. 209), 231-2 (No. 252), 235-7 (No. 255), 244-5 (No. 264), 253-4 (No. 274), 281 (No. 313), 304 (No. 341).
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To Sir E. Grey, 239-40 (No. 258).
- ENVER BEY (PASHA), Chief of the Young Turk Central Committee, 1908; Military *Attaché* at Berlin, 1909-13; Minister for War and Chief of the General Staff, 1914.
Appointed Minister for War, January 1914, 179 (No. 193), 189 (No. 202).
- ERSKINE, HON. WILLIAM A. F., Councillor of Embassy at British Legation at Athens, 1913-6 (sometimes *Chargé d'Affaires*); Delegate on the International Financial Commission
To Sir E. Grey, 262-4 (Nos. 286-7), 265-6 (Nos. 290-1), 268-9 (Nos. 295-7), 271 (No. 300), 272-3 (No. 302), 274-5 (Nos. 305-6), 276-8 (No. 309).
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Conversation with M. Venizelos, 266 (No. 291), 271 (No. 300), 272 (No. 302).
- ESSAD PASHA, TOPTANI, Member of the Turkish Chamber, 1911; Commandant at Scutari, 1913; Usurper in Middle Albania, 1913; Albanian Minister for the Interior and Minister for War, 1914.
 10 (No. 13), 19 (No. 23), 25 (No. 32), 92 (No. 107).
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- FETTER, M. N. S. DE, Councillor of Russian Embassy at London, 1910-4 (sometimes *Chargé d'Affaires*).
Communication from, 178-9 (No. 192), 826-7 (No. 852).
Conversation with Sir Eyre Crowe, 183-4 (No. 198), 393 (No. 443, *min.*), 400-1 (No. 452), 402 (*ed. note*), 404 (No. 454).
Conversation with Sir E. Grey, 118 (No. 135), 411-2 (No. 462), 520-1 (No. 571).
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- FAZLULLAH, SHEIKH.
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- FETIZI BEY ALIZOT, Albanian Minister for the Interior, 1913; Director-General of Internal Affairs, 1914.
Appointed Director-General of Internal Affairs of Albania, 96 (No. 111).
- H.R.H. PRINCE FERDINAND OF BULGARIA, 1887-1909; H.M. the King of the Bulgarians, 1909-18
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- H.R.H. PRINCE FERDINAND OF RUMANIA; H.M. King Ferdinand I of Rumania, 1914-27.
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- FITZMAURICE, MR. G. H., British Consul at Constantinople, 1905; 2nd Dragoman at Embassy at Constantinople, 1906-7; Chief Dragoman, 1907-12.
Memorandum by, 506-15 (No. 567, *encl.*).
Scheme for reforms in Asiatic Turkey, 454 (No. 515).
- FLEURIAU, M. A. DE, 2nd (later 1st) Secretary at French Embassy at London, 1904-21 (sometimes *Chargé d'Affaires*).
Conversation with Sir Eyre Crowe, 87 (*ed. note*), 138 (No. 152).
Conversation with Sir A. Nicolson, 142 (No. 157).
- FLOTOW, HERR HANS VON, German Ambassador at Rome, 1913-5.
Conversation with Sir R. Rodd, 178 (No. 191), 251-2 (No. 272).
- FRANZ FERDINAND, Austro-Hungarian Archduke and Heir Apparent.
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- H.I.M. FRANZ JOSEF I, 1848-1916, Emperor of Austria and King of Hungary.
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- FÜRSTENBERG, EMIL, PRINCE ZU, Secretary at Austro-Hungarian Legation at Athens, 1911-3 (sometimes *Chargé d'Affaires*).
Conversation with King Constantino, 73-4 (No. 89), 74 (No. 90).
- GAMBLE, SIR DOUGLAS, Vice-Admiral in the British Navy, Naval Adviser to the Imperial Ottoman Government, 1908-10.
 368 (No. 414).
- GARRONI, MARQUIS CAMILLO, Italian Ambassador at Constantinople, 1912-5.
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- GAUTSCH VON FRANKENTHURN, OSKAR, BARON, Secretary at Austro-Hungarian Embassy at London, 1913.
Conversation with Sir Eyre Crowe, 38 (*ed. note*).
- GENADIEV, M. N., Bulgarian Minister for Foreign Affairs, July 1913-4.
Conversation with Talaat Bey, 286-7 (No. 319).
- GENNADIUS, M. J., Greek Minister at London, 1910-8.
To Sir E. Crowe, 175-6 (No. 189).
Conversation with Sir Eyre Crowe, 176-7 (No. 189, *min.*).
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- H M. KING GEORGE V, 1910-36.
And Article I of M. Sazonov's Draft Agreement, 588 (No. 628), 595 (No. 633).
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- H.M. KING GEORGE I, King of Greece, 1863-1913
Conversation with Sir E. Grey, 135-6 (No. 150).
- GHALIB BEY, Turkish *Chargé d'Affaires* at Bucharest, 1910; Councillor of Turkish Embassy at Berlin, 1912-3; Delegate at Græco-Turk Peace Negotiations at Athens, 1913; Minister at Athens, 1914-8.
Conversation with Mr. Erskine, 264 (No. 287).
Conversation with Sir E. Goschen, 376-7 (No. 424).
Conversation with M. Streit, 196 (No. 209).
Conversation with M. Venizelos, 275 (No. 306).
- GIER, M. N. N. DE, Russian Minister at Brussels, 1898-1910; Ambassador at Vienna, 1910-3.
Conversation with Sir F. Cartwright, 644 (No. 671).
Conversation with Emperor Franz Josef, 19 (No. 23).
- GIER, M. M. N. DE, Russian Minister at Bucharest, 1902-12; Ambassador at Constantinople, 1912-4.
 234 (No. 254).
Conversation with Sir L. Mallet, 354 (No. 396), 358 (No. 403), 360 (No. 405), 372-3 (No. 419), 526-7 (No. 581), 529-30 (No. 583), 531 (No. 584), 533-4 (No. 585), 538 (No. 586, *min.*), 539 (No. 587).
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GIOLITTI, SIGNOR G., Italian Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior, 1906-9, 1911-4.
Conversation with Sir R. Rodd, 132 (No. 146).

GOLTZ, BARON KOLMAR VON DER, Prussian General, Inspector-General of the VIth Army of Inspection, 1907; in charge of reorganisation of Turkish Army, 1908-10; Field Marshal, 1911; Vice-President of the Turkish Supreme War Council, 1909, 1910, 1913.
 339 (No. 378), 345 (No. 384), 350 (No. 391, *encl.*), 354 (No. 396), 355 (No. 398), 357 (No. 402, *and encl.*), 358 (No. 403), 360 (No. 405), 362 (No. 407, *min.*), 364 (No. 410), 371 (No. 418), 376 (No. 424), 380 (No. 427), 385 (No. 433), 398 (No. 450), 418 (No. 468).

GOSCHEN, SIR W. E., British Ambassador at Vienna, 1905-8; at Berlin, 1908-14.

To Sir E. Grey, 32-3 (No. 38), 39-40 (No. 46), 46-7 (No. 54), 67 (No. 81), 71 (No. 86), 79-80 (Nos. 93-4), 80-1 (No. 96), 120 (No. 137), 210-3 (Nos. 222-3), 218-9 (No. 232), 225 (No. 242), 227-8 (No. 245), 259 (No. 280), 338-9 (No. 377), 374-5 (No. 423), 379-80 (No. 427), 398-9 (No. 450), 402-3 (No. 453), 406 (No. 456), 470 (No. 532), 524-5 (No. 578), 526 (No. 580), 557-8 (No. 607).

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Conversation with M. Jules Cambon, 605 (No. 640).

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Conversation with Herr von Jagow, 79 (No. 93), 210-1 (No. 222), 212-3 (No. 223), 218-9 (No. 232), 225 (No. 242), 227-8 (No. 245), 259 (No. 280), 398 (No. 450), 402-3 (No. 453), 405 (No. 455), 406 (No. 456), 425 (No. 477), 470 (No. 532).

Conversation with Herr von Kiderlen-Waechter, 557-8 (No. 607), 566-7 (No. 613).

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To Sir E. Grey, 391-2 (No. 441), 405-6 (No. 455).

To Sir A. Nicolson, 35-6 (No. 42), 376-8 (No. 424), 425-6 (No. 477), 605-6 (No. 640).

GRAHAME, MR. GEORGE DIXON, 2nd (later 1st) Secretary at British Embassy at Paris, 1905-16 (sometimes *Chargé d'Affaires*).

To Sir E. Grey, 102 (No. 117).

Conversation with M. de Margerie, 102 (No. 117).

GRANET, COLONEL EDWARD JOHN, British representative on the International Commission for the delimitation of the N. and N.E. frontier of Albania, 1913.

British representative on Commission for the Delimitation of N. and N.E. frontier of Albania, 7 (*ed. note*).

GRANVILLE (GEORGE LEYESON-GOWER), 3RD EARL, 2nd Secretary at British Embassy at Berlin, 1904-5; 1st Secretary at Berlin, 1905-8; at Brussels, 1908-11 (sometimes *Chargé d'Affaires*); at Berlin, 1911-3 (sometimes *Chargé d'Affaires*); at Paris 1913-6 (sometimes *Chargé d'Affaires*); Ambassador at Brussels, 1928-

To Sir E. Grey, 16-7 (No. 21), 22-3 (No. 29), 344-5 (No. 384), 487 (No. 546), 498 (No. 557), 500 (No. 560), 504 (No. 566).

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Conversation with M. Pichon, 344-5 (No. 384).

Conversation with Baron von Wangenheim, 406 (No. 455).

GRAVES, MR. ROBERT WYNDHAM, British Consul-General at Salonica, 1903; British Delegate on the International Financial Commission in Macedonia, 1907; seconded for service under the Turkish Government, September 1909.

Invitation to be an Inspector-General in N.E. Anatolia, 518 (No. 569), 520 (No. 570).

GREY, SIR EDWARD (since 1916, 1st VISCOUNT GREY OF FALLODON), Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, December 11, 1905-December 11, 1916.

To Mr. Akers-Douglas, 127-8 (No. 142).

To Sir G. Barclay, 319-20 (No. 356), 332-3 (No. 369), 690 (No. 713), 770 (No. 782), 777 (No. 790), 782 (Nos. 795-6), 785-6 (Nos. 800-1), 795-6 (Nos. 808-9), 801 (No. 815), 806 (No. 820), 817 (No. 835), 820 (Nos. 840-1), 843-4 (No. 870), 855 (No. 877), 860 (No. 884), 866 (No. 892).

To Sir H. Bax-Ironside, 325 (No. 360), 327 (No. 364).

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- To Sir F. Bertie, 1-2 (Nos. 1-2), 10-1 (No. 14), 50 (No. 53), 51-2 (No. 60), 60 (No. 71), 63-4 (No. 75), 76-7 (No. 91), 94 (Nos. 108-9), 101 (No. 115), 105-7 (No. 121), 114 (No. 128), 130 (No. 144), 134 (No. 148), 138-9 (No. 152), 141 (No. 155), 142 (No. 157), 151-2 (No. 166), 180-1 (No. 194), 193 (No. 205), 217-8 (No. 231), 222-4 (Nos. 237-9), 230 (No. 249), 241-2 (No. 260), 260-1 (No. 282), 292-3 (*ed. note*), 323-4 (No. 359), 334 (No. 371), 339-40 (No. 378), 364-5 (No. 411), 387 (No. 436), 392 (No. 442), 424 (No. 475), 434 (No. 485), 443-4 (Nos. 496-7), 490 (No. 549), 503 (No. 565), 548 (No. 594), 624-5 (No. 654), 668 (No. 691), 670-1 (No. 695), 692-3 (No. 716), 705 (No. 727), 750 (No. 755).
- To Mr. Bryce, 838-9 (No. 863).
- To Sir G. Buchanan, 118 (No. 135), 183-4 (No. 198), 228 (No. 246), 245 (No. 265), 250 (No. 269), 402 (*ed. note*), 404 (No. 454), 411-2 (No. 462), 450-1 (No. 508), 453-4 (Nos. 512-3), 460-1 (Nos. 517-8), 466 (No. 527), 468 (No. 530), 480-1 (No. 541), 488-9 (No. 547), 499 (No. 558), 581-2 (No. 621), 586-7 (Nos. 625-6), 622-3 (No. 653), 639-40 (Nos. 665-6), 642 (No. 669), 649 (No. 677), 651 (No. 679), 662 (No. 685), 664-5 (Nos. 687-8), 668-9 (No. 692), 672-3 (No. 698), 681 (No. 703), 682-3 (No. 705), 684 (No. 707), 688-9 (Nos. 710-1), 693-4 (No. 717), 697-8 (No. 720), 704 (No. 725), 712 (No. 734), 714 (No. 736), 747 (Nos. 749-50), 749 (No. 754), 754 (No. 761), 756-7 (No. 765), 762 (No. 772), 766 (No. 777), 767 (No. 779), 774 (No. 787), 778 (No. 791), 786 (No. 802), 806 (No. 813), 810 (No. 825), 826 (No. 851), 831 (Nos. 855-6), 834 (No. 859), 836-7 (No. 861), 839 (No. 864), 841 (No. 867), 844-6 (Nos. 871-4), 855 (No. 878), 860 (No. 883), 861 (No. 885), 862-3 (No. 887), 866 (No. 891), 872 (No. 896), 890 (No. 905).
- To Sir M. de Bunsen, 73 (No. 88), 86 (No. 102), 97-9 (No. 112), 110 (No. 124).
- To Mr. Carnegie, 464-5 (No. 525).
- To Sir F. Cartwright, 44-5 (No. 51).
- To Mr. Crackanthorpe, 6 (No. 7), 21 (No. 26), 31 (No. 36).
- To Mr. Dering, 61-2 (No. 73), 69 (No. 83), 139-41 (Nos. 153-4), 141-2 (No. 156), 144 (No. 159).
- To Sir F. Elliot, 22 (No. 27), 69-70 (No. 84), 95 (No. 110), 104-5 (No. 120), 111 (No. 125), 135-6 (No. 150), 150 (No. 164).
- To Sir E. Goschen, 36-7 (No. 43), 41 (No. 48), 78 (No. 92), 80 (No. 95), 82-3 (No. 99), 100-1 (No. 114), 102 (No. 116), 153-4 (No. 169), 166 (No. 182), 181-2 (No. 196), 214 (No. 225), 217 (No. 229), 221-2 (No. 235), 240-1 (No. 259), 242-3 (No. 261), 261-2 (Nos. 283-4), 363-4 (No. 410), 383-4 (No. 431), 396 (No. 447), 411 (No. 461), 424-5 (No. 476), 444-5 (No. 499), 463-4 (No. 523), 465-6 (No. 526), 474 (No. 537), 523 (No. 575), 750 (No. 756).
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- To Mr. H. Lamb, 116 (No. 132), 121-2 (No. 138), 128-9 (No. 143).
- To Prince Lichnowsky, 196-8 (No. 211).
- To Sir G. Lowther, 430 (No. 480), 431-2 (No. 482), 432-3 (No. 483), 446-7 (No. 502), 448 (No. 504), 460 (No. 516).
- To Sir L. Mallet, 155 (No. 171), 161 (No. 177), 173 (No. 187), 196 (No. 210), 200 (No. 213), 205 (No. 219), 216 (Nos. 227-8), 222 (No. 236), 231 (Nos. 250-1), 247-8 (No. 267), 262 (No. 285), 337 (*ed. note*), 347 (No. 387), 355 (Nos. 398-9), 363 (Nos. 408-9), 373 (Nos. 420-1), 421 (No. 471), 523 (No. 574), 525 (No. 579), 540 (No. 588), 547-8 (No. 593).
- To Mr. Marling, 479 (No. 539), 485-6 (No. 544), 520 (No. 570).
- To Mr. O'Beirne, 60 (No. 72), 342 (No. 381), 346 (No. 386), 347 (No. 388), 370-1 (No. 417), 384-5 (No. 432), 386 (No. 434), 436 (No. 489), 442 (No. 495), 446 (No. 501), 449 (No. 506), 520-1 (No. 571), 549-50 (No. 597), 553 (No. 601), 810 (No. 824), 815-6 (No. 831), 816 (No. 833), 823 (No. 845), 825 (No. 849).
- To Sir R. Rodd, 118 (No. 134), 118-20 (No. 136), 130-1 (No. 145), 153 (No. 168), 182-3 (No. 197), 193-4 (No. 206), 202-4 (Nos. 216-7), 213-4 (No. 224), 243-4 (No. 263), 251 (No. 271), 354 (No. 397), 618-9 (No. 650).
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- Conversation with M. Paul Cambon, 50 (No. 58), 60 (No. 72), 94 (No. 109), 101 (No. 115), 105 (No. 121), 114 (Nos. 128-9), 130 (No. 144), 141 (No. 155), 146 (No. 161, *min.*), 151-2 (No. 166), 180-1 (No. 194), 217-8 (No. 231), 223 (No. 239), 241-2 (No. 260), 260-1 (No. 282), 348 (No. 390), 364-5 (No. 411), 387 (No. 436), 424 (No. 475), 434 (No. 485), 443 (No. 496), 460 (No. 516), 464-5 (No. 525), 548 (No. 594), 624-5 (No. 654), 692-3 (No. 716), 705 (No. 727), 750 (No. 755).

GREY, SIR EDWARD (since 1916, 1st VISCOUNT GREY OF FALLODON)—(continued).

Conversation with M. de Etter, 118 (No. 135), 411-2 (No. 462), 520-1 (No. 571).

Conversation with M. Gennadius, 69-70 (No. 84), 104-5 (No. 120), 111 (No. 125), 150 (No. 164), 266 (No. 290, *min.*).

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Conversation with Mr. Whitelaw Reid, 838-9 (No. 863).

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Speech by, in the House of Commons, 132 (No. 146, and *note* (2)), 140 (No. 153), 855 (No. 878).

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To Count Benckendorff, 755-6 (No. 763).

To Sir F. Bertie, 67 (No. 80), 707 (No. 729).

To Sir G. Buchanan, 423 (No. 474), 604-5 (No. 639), 617 (No. 648), 896-7 (No. 912).

To Sir F. Elliot, 194-5 (No. 207).

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To Dr. Hodgkin, 898-9 (No. 914).

To Sir L. Mallet, 164-5 (Nos. 180-1), 224 (No. 240), 243 (No. 262), 352 (No. 392).

GRIMTHORPE, ERNEST WILLIAM, 2ND BARON, sometime partner in Beckett and Co., Bankers, Leeds.

689 (No. 711).

GRUIĆ, M. SLAVKO, Secretary to Servian Legation at London, 1908-13 (sometimes *Chargé d'Affaires*).

Communications from, 9 (No. 12), 34-5 (No. 40), 48 (No. 55).

Conversation with Sir Eyre Crowe, 9-10 (No. 12, *min.*).

- GRYPARIS, M. JOHANN, Greek Minister at Constantinople, 1903-10; Minister for Foreign Affairs, 1910-2, Minister at Constantinople, 1912-3; at Vienna, 1914-7.
Conversation with Sir M. de Bunson, 336 (No. 374).
- GULKEVICH, M. KONSTANTIN NIKOLAIEVICH, Councillor at Russian Embassy at Constantinople, 1912-4 (sometimes *Chargé d'Affaires*).
 234 (No. 254), 239 (No. 257).
Conversation with Sir L. Mallet, 422 (No. 472).
- GWINNER, DR ARTHUR, Director of the Deutsche Bank.
 466 (No. 526), 633 (No. 661).
- HALGOUET, VICOMTE DU, Secretary at French Legation at Tehran, 1910-2 (sometimes *Chargé d'Affaires*).
Conversation with Sir G. Barclay, 748 (No. 751).
- HARRIS, MR. MURRAY GEORGE, British Acting Vice-Consul at Constantinople, 1912, and at Dardanelles and Diarbekir in 1913; Secretary to the British Delegate on the International Commission of Control in Albania, 1913-4.
To Sir E. Grey, 99-100 (No. 113)
- HARTWIG, M. N. H. DE, Director of First Department of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1904-6; Minister at Tehran, 1906-9; at Belgrade, 1909-14.
Conversation with Mr. Crackanthorpe, 37 (No. 44), 45 (No. 52).
- HAWKER, COLONEL CLAUDE JULIAN, of the British Army; Employed with the Turkish Gendarmerie, 1910-4.
Appointed Chief of Committee of Inspection of Gendarmerie for Armenian Vilayets, 524 (No. 577), 538 (No. 586, min.).
- HILMI PASHA.
(v. sub HUSSEIN HILMI PASHA)
- HIRTZEL, MR. (since 1911, SIR) F. ARTHUR, Secretary, Political Department, India Office, 1909-17; Assistant Under-Secretary of State, 1917-21; Deputy Under-Secretary, 1921-4; Permanent Under-Secretary, 1924-30.
 624 (*ed. note*), 632 (No. 659, *min.*).
- HOFF, MAJOR, Norwegian Army, Inspector-General in Eastern Anatolia, 1914.
Appointed an Inspector-General of the Eastern Vilayets, 548 (No. 595).
- HUBKA, MAJOR GUSTAV, Austro-Hungarian Military *Attaché* at Cettinje, 1912-4.
 327 (No. 363).
- HUSSEIN HILMI PASHA, Turkish Inspector-General of Macedonia, 1902-8; Minister for the Interior, 1908-9; Grand Vizier, 1909; Ambassador at Vienna, 1912-8.
Conversation with Sir M. de Bunsen, 72 (No. 87), 161 (No. 176), 167-8 (No. 184), 174 (No. 188), 188-9 (No. 202), 201-2 (No. 215), 322 (No. 358), 359 (No. 404).
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- IMPERIALI, MARQUIS GUGLIELMO, Italian Ambassador at London, 1910-21.
Conversation with Sir Eyre Crowe, 68 (No. 82), 87 (ed. note).
Conversation with Sir E. Grey, 61-2 (No. 73), 69 (No. 83), 118-20 (No. 136), 130 (No. 144), 130-1 (No. 145), 141-2 (No. 156), 144 (No. 159), 149 (No. 162, min.), 182-3 (No. 197), 193-4 (No. 206), 202-4 (Nos. 216-7), 243 (No. 263), 251 (No. 271), 354 (No. 397), 618-9 (No. 650).
Conversation with Sir A. Nicolson, 68 (No. 82), 219 (No. 233), 222 (No. 237).
- ISMAIL KEMAL BEY, Albanian Deputy in Turkish Parliament, 1909-11; President of the Provisional Government in Albania, 1912-3.
Provisional Government for Albania, 61 (No. 73), 90 (No. 106), 92-3 (No. 107), 96 (No. 111).
- ISVOLSKI, M. ALEXANDER, Russian Minister at Copenhagen, 1903-6; Minister for Foreign Affairs, 1906-10; Ambassador at Paris, 1910-7.
Conversation with Sir F. Cartwright, 588 (No. 627).
Conversation with M. Doumergue, 388 (No. 438).
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- IZZET PASHA, Turkish General, Chief of General Staff, 1910-2; Minister of War, 1913.
 22 (No. 29).
Conversation with Lieutenant-Colonel Tyrrell, 350 (No. 391, encl.).
- JACQUIN DE MARGERIE, M. BRUNO
(v. sub MARGERIE.)

- JAGOW, HERR G. VON, German Ambassador at Rome, 1909-12; Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1913-6.
Conversation with Sir E. Goschen, 79 (No. 93), 210-1 (No. 222), 212-3 (No. 223), 218-9 (No. 232), 225 (No. 242), 227-8 (No. 245), 259 (No. 280), 398 (No. 450), 402-3 (No. 453), 405 (No. 455), 406 (No. 456), 425 (No. 477), 470 (No. 532).
Conversation with Lord Granville, 16 (No. 21), 22 (No. 29), 487 (No. 546), 498 (No. 557), 500 (No. 560).
Conversation with M. de Sverbeiev, 376 (No. 424).
Conversation with M. Venizelos, 211-2 (No. 223).
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- JONESCU, M. TAKÉ, Rumanian Minister for the Interior, 1912-4.
And Turco-Greek peace negotiations, 281-2 (No. 314).
Conversation with Sir G. Barclay, 282-3 (No. 315).
Conversation with Sir E. Grey, 127-8 (No. 142).
Conversation with Sir L. Mallet, 144-5 (No. 160).
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- KERR, REAR-ADMIRAL MARK E. F., British Naval *Attaché* to Italy, Austria, Greece and Turkey, 1903-4; Commander-in-Chief of the Greek Navy, 1913-5.
 264 (No. 286).
- KHOMIAKOV, M., Promoter of the Trans-Persian Railway scheme.
Conversation with Sir G. Buchanan, 696 (No. 719), 702 (No. 723), 704 (No. 724).
- KIDERLEN-WACHTER, HERR VON, German Minister at Bucharest, 1899-1910; Attached to German Foreign Office, 1908-9; Minister for Foreign Affairs, 1910-2.
Conversation with M. Jules Cambon, 558 (No. 607), 567 (No. 613), 587 (No. 627), 747 (No. 749).
Conversation with Sir E. Goschen, 557-8 (No. 607), 566-7 (No. 613).
Conversation with M. Sazonov, 587 (No. 627).
- KLEMM, M. WILHELM OSKAROVICH, Head of the Persian Department of the Russian Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 1910-1.
To Sir G. Buchanan, 869-70 (No. 894, *encl.* 1).
- KNOLLYS, FRANCIS, 1ST BARON OF CAVERSHAM (since 1911, 1st VISCOUNT), Private Secretary to King Edward VII, and to King George V.
To Sir E. Grey, 588 (No. 628).
To Sir A. Nicolson, 595 (No. 633).
- KOKOVTSOV, M., Russian Minister for Finance, 1903-14; President of the Council, 1911-14.
Conversation with Sir F. Bertie, 66-7 (No. 79).
Conversation with Herr von Bethmann Hollweg, 339 (No. 378).
Conversation with Sir G. Buchanan, 594-5 (No. 632), 829-30 (No. 854), 847-9 (No. 875), 857 (No. 879).
Conversation with M. Jules Cambon, 339-40 (No. 378).
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Conversation with Emperor William II, 339 (No. 378).
- KROOM, Major in the Dutch Army, Director of Military Operations at Durazzo, 1914.
 121 (*ed. note*).
- KROUPENSKI, M. A. N., Russian Ambassador at Rome, 1912-7.
Conversation with Sir R. Rodd, 177 (No. 190).
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- KUELMANN, HERR R. VON, Secretary at German Legation at Tangier, 1904-6; Councillor of Embassy at London, 1908-14 (sometimes *Chargé d'Affaires*).
Conversation with Sir Eyre Crowe, 33 (No. 38, *min.*), 78-9 (No. 92).
Conversation with Sir E. Grey, 41 (No. 48), 363 (No. 409), 363-4 (No. 410).
- LAMB, MR. (since 1919, SIR) H. H., Chief Dragoman to the British Embassy at Constantinople, 1903-7; Consul-General at Salonica, 1907-13.
To Sir E. Grey, 34 (No. 39), 89 (*ed. note*), 96-7 (No. 111), 99-100 (No. 113), 103-4 (No. 119), 107 (*ed. note*), 115-6 (Nos. 130-1, and *ed. note*), 116-7 (No. 133), 126-7 (No. 141).
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To Sir Eyre Crowe, 92-3 (No. 107).
 British representative on Commission for Control of Albania, 1 (*ed. note*).

- LECOFFRE, MR., British Inspector in Persian Ministry of Finance, 1911-4.
Appointment of, as Treasury Agent at Tabriz, 819 (No. 839), 820 (No. 840), 822 (No. 843), 833 (No. 858), 842 (No. 868).
- LIAKHOV, COLONEL V., Russian Chief Commander of Cossack Brigade in Persia, 1909
 738 (No. 746).
- LIBOHOVA MUFID BEY, Albanian Minister for Foreign Affairs and Interior in the Provisional Government, 1913; Representative on Commission for Control of Albania.
 61 (No. 73), 63 (No. 74, *min.*), 96 (No. 111), 126 (No. 141)
- LICHENOWSKY, PRINCE KARL MAX, German Ambassador at London, 1912-4
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Conversation with Sir E. Grey, 102 (No. 116), 181-2 (No. 196), 240-1 (No. 259), 242 (No. 261), 261 (No. 283), 275-6 (No. 307), 383-4 (No. 431), 411 (No. 461), 424-5 (No. 476), 444-5 (No. 499), 446 (No. 501), 463-4 (No. 523), 465-6 (No. 526), 474 (No. 537), 484-5 (No. 543), 501 (No. 562).
Conversation with Sir A. Nicolson, 219 (No. 233), 222 (No. 237).
- LIMAN VON SANDERS, LIEUTENANT-GENERAL OTTO, Head of German Military Mission in Turkey, 1913-4.
 Liman von Sanders Mission, 1913-4, Chapter LXXXVII, 333-423 (Nos. 376-474).
- LIMPUS, A. H., Rear-Admiral in the British Navy, Naval Adviser to the Ottoman Ministry of Marine, 1912-4.
 358 (No. 403), 359 (No. 403, *min.*), 361-2 (No. 407), 363 (No. 409), 364 (No. 410), 367 (No. 414, *note* (4)), 368 (No. 414, *min.*, and *note* (5)), 369 (*ed. note*), 369-70 (No. 416), 370 (*ed. note*), 373 (No. 419), 373 (No. 420), 375 (No. 423, *min.*), 376-7 (No. 424), 379 (No. 426), 381 (No. 428), 383 (No. 431), 384 (No. 432), 385 (No. 433), 392 (No. 441)
Conversation with Sir L. Mallet, 195 (No. 208).
- LINDSAY, HON. (since 1925, SIR) RONALD C., Clerk in British Foreign Office, 1908-11, Assistant Private Secretary to Sir E. Grey, 1908-9; 2nd Secretary (later 1st) at the Hague, 1911-2 (sometimes *Chargé d'Affaires*); Under-Secretary in Egyptian Ministry of Finance, 1913-9; Counsellor of Embassy at Washington, 1919-20; at Paris, 1920; Assistant Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1921-4; Minister (later Ambassador) at Constantinople, 1924-5; Ambassador at Berlin, 1926-8; Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1928-30; Ambassador at Washington, 1930-
Minute by, 568 (No. 613), 570 (No. 614).
- LLOYD GEORGE, MR. D., Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1908-15; Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury, 1916-22.
Interview with, reported in the Daily Chronicle and Times, January 1, 1914, 409 (No. 459, and *note* (4)).
- LOBANOV-ROSTOVSKI, PRINCE, Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, 1895-6.
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- LOUIS, M. GEORGES, *Directeur Politique* at the French Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 1905-9; Ambassador at St. Petersburg, 1909-13.
Conversation with Sir G. Buchanan, 635 (No. 662), 723 (No. 744).
Conversation with Emperor Nicholas II, 616 (No. 647).
Conversation with M. Sazonov, 567 (No. 613), 607 (No. 642), 641 (No. 668), 748 (No. 752).
- LOWTHER, MR. (since 1907, SIR) G. A., British Minister at Tangier, 1905-8; Ambassador at Constantinople, 1908-13.
 To Sir E. Grey, 426-7 (No. 478), 431 (No. 481), 447-8 (No. 503), 454-9 (No. 515), 468 (No. 529).
- LUOIS, HELLMUTH BARON VON, Councillor of German Embassy at St. Petersburg, 1911-4 (sometimes *Chargé d'Affaires*); Diplomatic Agent and Consul-General at Durazzo, 1914.
Conversation with M. Neratov, 353 (No. 394).
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- LUZZATI, SIGNOR LUIGI, Italian Prime Minister and Minister for the Interior, 1910-1.
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MAHOMED ALI MIRZA, Shah of Persia, January 1907–July 1909.

733 (No. 746, *note* ⁽⁸⁾)

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MAIORESCU, M. TITU, Rumanian Minister for Foreign Affairs, 1911; Minister-President and Minister for Foreign Affairs, 1912–4.

Speech by, 331 (No. 367).

MALLET, MR. (since 1912, SIR) LOUIS, Assistant Clerk in British Foreign Office, 1902–5; Private Secretary to Sir E. Grey, 1905–6; Senior Clerk, 1906–7; Assistant Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1907–13; Ambassador at Constantinople, 1913–4.

To Sir E. Grey, 144–5 (No. 160), 156–7 (Nos. 172–3), 159 (No. 175), 162–3 (No. 178), 168–71 (No. 185), 179–80 (No. 193), 199 (No. 212), 200 (No. 214), 215 (No. 226), 220–1 (No. 234), 224–5 (No. 241), 229–30 (No. 248), 232–4 (No. 253), 252–3 (No. 273), 256–7 (Nos. 277–8), 259–60 (No. 281), 266–8 (Nos. 292–4), 270–1 (No. 298–9), 281–2 (No. 314), 284–5 (No. 317), 286–7 (No. 319), 289 (No. 322), 297 (No. 329), 333–4 (No. 370), 338 (No. 376), 348 (No. 389), 349–51 (No. 391), 353–4 (Nos. 395–6), 355 (No. 400), 356–8 (Nos. 402–3), 361–2 (No. 407), 367–8 (No. 414), 369–70 (No. 416), 372–3 (No. 419), 379 (No. 426), 380–1 (No. 428), 382 (No. 430), 385–6 (No. 433), 387 (No. 435), 393 (No. 444), 414 (No. 461), 421 (No. 470), 422 (No. 472), 522 (No. 573), 524 (No. 577), 526–39 (Nos. 581–7), 541–7 (Nos. 589–92), 548 (No. 595).

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Conversation with Djemal Bey, Minister of Public Works, 168–71 (No. 185), 224–5 (No. 241).

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Conversation with M. Gulkevich, 422 (No. 472).

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To Sir E. Grey, 150–1 (No. 165), 158–9 (No. 174), 191–2 (No. 204), 195 (No. 208), 204–5 (No. 218), 228–9 (No. 247), 234 (No. 254), 238–9 (No. 257), 360–1 (No. 405).

MANDELSTAM, M., 1st Dragoman of Russian Embassy at Constantinople, 1912–4.

Scheme for reforms in Asiatic Turkey, 454 (No. 515).

- MANU, M. C. G., Rumanian Minister at London, 1912; at Constantinople, 1913-6.
Conversation with Sir A. Nicolson, 56 (No. 64, min.).
- MARCHAND, M. RENÉ, French Journalist, Correspondent of the *Figaro* at St. Petersburg.
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- MARGANI, Colonel, Russian Army.
 Nominated as Commander of Cossack Brigade in Persia, and withdrawal from, 738 (No. 746).
- MARGERIE, M. BRUNO F. M. P. JACQUIN DE, Assistant *Directeur Politique* at the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1912.
Conversation with Mr Grahame, 102 (No. 117).
- MARGHILOMAN, M. ALEXANDRE, Rumanian Minister of Finance, 1912-3; Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, 1913.
Conversation with Sir G. Barclay, 55-6 (No. 64).
Conversation with M. Schebeko, 55-6 (No. 64).
- MARLING, MR. (since 1916, SIR) C. M., Councillor of Embassy at British Embassy at Constantinople, 1908-10 (sometimes *Chargé d'Affaires*); *Chargé d'Affaires* at Tehran, 1910; at Constantinople, 1910-5 (sometimes *Chargé d'Affaires*).
To Sir E. Grey, 471-2 (Nos. 533-4), 474-9 (No. 538), 479-80 (No. 540), 493-4 (No. 553), 495-6 (No. 555), 504-18 (Nos. 567-9), 617-8 (No. 649), 619-21 (Nos. 651-2).
Conversation with M. de Giers, 517 (No. 568).
Conversation with Rifaat Pasha, 619-20 (No. 651).
Conversation with Baron von Wangenheim, 479-80 (No. 540), 493 (No. 553), 517 (No. 568).
- MARSCHALL VON BIEBERSTEIN, ADOLF, BARON, German Ambassador at Constantinople, 1897-1912; at London, 1912.
Conversation with Rifaat Pasha, 617 (No. 649), 619-20 (No. 651).
- MARTINO, SIGNOR N. G. DI, Secretary-General of the Italian Foreign Office, 1913-19.
Conversation with Sir E. Grey, 182 (No. 197).
Conversation with Sir R. Rodd, 217 (No. 230).
- MAXWELL, MR. R. P., Senior Clerk in British Foreign Office, 1902-13.
Minute by, 435 (No. 487), 437 (No. 490), 439 (No. 492), 469 (No. 531), 480 (No. 540), 517 (No. 568), 570 (No. 614), 575 (No. 618), 632 (No. 659), 636 (No. 663), 710 (No. 732), 757 (No. 766), 765 (No. 775), 810 (No. 823), 812 (No. 827), 815 (No. 830).
- MEHMED NABY BEY, Turkish Minister at Athens, 1908-11; at Sofia, 1911-2; Delegate at Turco-Italian Peace Negotiations, 1911; Ambassador at Rome, 1912-5.
Conversation with Mr. Dering, 145-6 (No. 161), 147-8 (No. 162).
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- MEHMED TALAAT BEY, First Vice-President of Turkish Chamber of Deputies, 1909; Minister of the Interior, 1909-13; Delegate to the Peace Negotiations at Bucharest, 1913; Minister of the Interior, 1913.
 529 (No. 582).
Conversation with M. Genadiev, 286-7 (No. 319).
Conversation with M. Také Jonescu, 282 (No. 314), 282 (No. 315).
Conversation with Sir L. Mallet, 220-1 (No. 234), 266-7 (No. 292), 267 (No. 293), 267-8 (No. 294), 270 (No. 298), 543 (No. 590), 547 (No. 592).
Conversation with M. Sazonov, 328 (No. 365).
Visit to Bucharest, May 1914, 255 (No. 275, and note (2)), 257 (No. 278).
- MENSENDORFF-POUILLY-DIETRICHSTEIN, ALBERT, COUNT, 1st Secretary at the Austro-Hungarian Embassy at London, 1904; Ambassador at London, 1904-14.
Conversation with Sir Eyre Crowe, 29 (ed. note), 33-4 (No. 38, min.).
Conversation with Sir E. Grey, 44-5 (No. 51), 64 (No. 76), 73 (No. 88), 97-8 (No. 112), 110 (No. 124).
Conversation with Sir A. Nicolson, 62 (No. 73, note (4)), 68 (No. 82), 219 (No. 233), 222 (No. 237).
- METTERNICH, PAUL VON WOLFF-, COUNT, German Ambassador at London, 1901-12.
Conversation with Sir E. Grey, 750 (No. 756).

MICHAILOVIĆ, M. L., Secretary of Servian Legation at Rome, 1912-4 (sometimes *Chargé d'Affaires*).

Conversation with Sir R. Rodd, 301 (No. 336).

MIRZA MEHDI KHAN, Persian Minister at London, 1911-21.

Conversation with Sir E. Grey, 796 (No. 809), 817 (No. 835), 831 (No. 856), 844-5 (No. 872), 845 (No. 873), 855 (No. 877), 890 (No. 905).

Conversation with Sir A. Nicolson, 820 (No. 841), 843-4 (No. 870).

MISU, M. NICOLAS, Rumanian Minister at Vienna, 1908-11; at Constantinople, 1911-2; at London, 1912-20.

Conversation with Sir E. Grey, 319-20 (No. 356).

MOHTASHEM-ES-SALTANEH (MUTASHAMU'S SALTANA), Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs, October 1910-July 26, 1911.

Conversation with Sir G. Barclay, 751-2 (No. 758), 773 (No. 786).

Conversation with M. Poklerski-Koziell, 752 (No. 758).

MORLEY, MR. JOHN (since 1908, VISCOUNT MORLEY OF BLACKBURN), British Secretary of State for India, 1905-10, March-May 1911; Lord President of the Council, 1910-4; in charge of Foreign Office, July 1911, April 1913.

Minute by, 663-4 (No. 686).

Speech by in House of Lords, 1911, 886 (No. 903).

MORNARD, M. J., Belgian Administrator-General of Persian Customs at Tehran, 1900-15.

764 (No. 775), 765 (No. 776), 767 (No. 778, *min.*), 767 (No. 779), 768-9 (No. 780, *min.*), 769-70 (No. 781), 770-1 (No. 783), 772 (No. 784), 896 (No. 911).

MUFID BEY.

(*v. sub* LIBOHVA MUFID BEY.)

MUKHTAR BEY, Turkish *Chargé d'Affaires* at Vienna, 1911; Minister at Athens, 1912; Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, 1913; Ambassador at St. Petersburg, 1913-4.

Conversation with M. Sazonov, 472 (No. 535).

NABY BEY.

(*v. sub* MEHMED NABY BEY.)

NEKLUDOV, M., Russian Councillor of Embassy at Paris, 1909-10; Minister at Sofia, 1911-3.

Conversation with M. Pichon, 570-1 (No. 615).

NERATOV, M. A. A., Russian Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, 1911-4.

To Sir G. Buchanan, 858 (No. 881), 870 (No. 894, encl. 2), 888 (No. 903, encl. 1)

Memoranda, &c., communicated to Sir G. Buchanan, 691 (No. 714, encl.), 853-5 (No. 876, encl.), 888 (No. 903, encl. 2).

Conversation with Sir G. Buchanan, 454 (No. 514), 685-7 (No. 708), 687-8 (No. 709), 690 (No. 712), 695 (No. 718), 698-9 (No. 721), 701-2 (No. 723), 703-4 (No. 724), 705 (No. 726), 705-6 (No. 728), 707-8 (No. 730), 710-2 (No. 733), 713-4 (No. 735), 716 (No. 739), 716-7 (No. 740), 718 (No. 741), 721 (No. 742), 723 (No. 744), 767-8 (No. 780), 775-6 (No. 789), 778-80 (No. 792), 780 (No. 793), 783-5 (Nos. 797-9), 786-7 (No. 803), 790-3 (No. 805), 793-4 (No. 806), 794 (No. 807), 798-9 (No. 812), 801-2 (No. 816), 803-4 (No. 818), 806-7 (No. 821), 827-9 (No. 853), 832 (No. 857), 832-3 (No. 858), 834-6 (No. 860), 837-8 (No. 862), 840-1 (No. 866), 843 (No. 869), 846-7, 849-52 (No. 875), 856 (No. 879), 859-60 (No. 882), 861-2 (No. 886), 868-9 (No. 894), 871 (No. 895), 872-3 (No. 897), 875-6 (No. 899), 880-1 (No. 901), 881-5 (No. 902), 885-8 (No. 903).

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NICOLSON, SIR ARTHUR (since 1916, 1ST BARON CARNOCK), British Ambassador at Madrid, 1905-6, at St. Petersburg, 1906-10; British Representative at Conference at Algéciras, 1906, Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1910-6

Annual Report for Russia, 1908, 724-8 (No. 745); for 1909, 729-40 (No. 746).

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NORMAN, MR. H. C., 2nd Secretary at British Embassy at St. Petersburg, 1903-6; employed in Foreign Office, 1906-14; 1st Secretary, 1907; Counsellor of Embassy at Buenos Aires, 1914-5 (sometimes *Chargé d'Affaires*); at Tôkiô, 1915-9.

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O'BEIRNE, MR. H. J., 2nd Secretary at British Embassy at Paris, 1900-4; 1st Secretary, 1904; at Washington, 1905; at Paris, 1905-6; Counsellor of Embassy at St. Petersburg, 1906-15 (sometimes *Chargé d'Affaires*)

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OBNORSKI, M. N., Secretary at Russian Legation at Cettinje (sometimes *Chargé d'Affaires*), 1912-4.

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OLIPHANT, MR. LANCELOT, Clerk in British Foreign Office, 1911-28; Acting Assistant Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1928-9; Assistant Under-Secretary, 1929- .

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O'REILLY, MR. WILLIAM EDWARD, 1st Secretary at British Legation at Sofia, 1912-5 (sometimes *Chargé d'Affaires*).

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- PALLAVICINI, JOHANN COUNT VON, Austro-Hungarian Minister at Bucharest, 1899-1906; Ambassador at Constantinople, 1906-18; Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, 1911.
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- PANAFIEU, M. H. A. DE, Councillor of French Embassy at St. Petersburg, 1907-12; Minister at Sofia, 1912-5.
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- PANAS, M. D., Secretary-General at Greek Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 1909; Minister at Sofia, 1910-3; Minister for Foreign Affairs, 1913-4; Minister at Constantinople, 1914-6.
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- PANSA, COMMENDATORE ALBERTO, Italian Ambassador at Berlin, 1907-13.
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- PARKER, MR. ALWYN, Clerk in British Foreign Office, 1906-12; Assistant Clerk, 1912-7; Librarian, 1918-9.
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- PAŠIĆ, M., Servian Prime Minister, 1906-8, 1909-11; Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, 1912-8.
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- PICHON, M. STEPHAN, French Minister for Foreign Affairs, 1906-11.
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- POINCARÉ, M. RAYMOND, French Minister for Finance, 1906; Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, 1912-3; President of the Republic, 1913.
Visit to London, 1913, 465-6 (No. 526).
- POKLEVSKI-KOZIELL, M. S. A., 1st Secretary to Russian Embassy at London, 1902-9 (sometimes *Chargé d'Affaires*); Minister at Tehran, 1909-13; at Bucharest, 1913-7.
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- PORUMBARU, M. E., Rumanian Minister for Foreign Affairs, 1914.
Conversation with Sir G. Barclay, 255-6 (No. 276), 265 (No. 289), 332 (No. 368).

POURTALES, COUNT VON, Prussian Minister at Munich, 1902-7; Ambassador at St. Petersburg, 1907-14.

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PRELLE DE LA NIEPPE, M. E. DE, Councillor of Belgian Legation at London, 1913-8.

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RADOSLAVOV, M. VASIL, Bulgarian Prime Minister, 1913-8.

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RAHIM KHAN, Persian Brigand.

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REID, MR. WHITELAW, United States' Ambassador at London, 1905-13.

Conversation with Sir E. Grey, 838-9 (No. 863).

RIFAAT PASHA, Turkish Ambassador at London, 1908-9; Minister for Foreign Affairs, 1909-11; Ambassador at Paris, 1911-4.

Conversation with Mr Marling, 619-20 (No. 651).

Conversation with Baron Marschall von Bieberstein, 617 (No. 649), 619-20 (No. 651).

Conversation with M. Pichon, 344 (No. 384).

RIZOV, M. D, Bulgarian Minister at Cettinje, 1903-5; at Belgrade, 1905-9; at Rome, 1909-15.

Conversation with Sir R. Rodd, 295-6 (No. 327).

ROCKHILL, MR. WILLIAM WOODVILLE, United States' Ambassador at St. Petersburg, 1909-11; at Constantinople, 1911-3.

Conversation with M. Neratov, 834 (No. 859).

RODD, SIR J. RENNELL (since 1933, BARON RENNELL OF RODD), Secretary of British Embassy at Rome, 1901-3 (sometimes *Chargé d'Affaires*); Councillor of Embassy, 1904; Minister at Stockholm, 1904-8; Ambassador at Rome, 1908-21.

To Sir E. Grey, 81-2 (No. 97), 89-90 (No. 105), 112-4 (No. 127), 122-3 (No. 139), 131-3 (No. 146), 152 (No. 167), 154-5 (No. 170), 163-4 (No. 179), 167 (No. 183), 177-8 (Nos. 190-1), 184-5 (No. 199), 186-7 (No. 201), 205-10 (Nos. 220-1), 217 (No. 230), 251 (No. 270), 251-2 (No. 272), 295-6 (No. 327), 301 (No. 336).

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RONALDSHAY, EARL OF (since 1929, 2ND MARQUESS OF ZETLAND), M.P. for Hornsey, 1907-16.

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RUSSELL, LIEUTENANT-COLONEL A. V. F., British Military *Attaché* at Berlin, 1910-4.

To Sir E. Goschen, 338-9 (No. 377, *encl.*), 379-80 (No. 427, *encl.*).

RUSSELL, HON. T. W. O. V., 1st Secretary at British Embassy at Vienna, 1908; Councillor of Embassy, 1909-14 (sometimes *Chargé d'Affaires*).

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To Sir A. Nicolson, 283-4 (No. 316).

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SAID HALIM PASHA, Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs, 1913-4; Grand Vizier, 1913-7.

To Mr Marling, 475-9 (No. 538, *encl.*), 485 (*ed. note*).

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ŠAINOVIĆ, M., Director of Political Department of the Servian Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 1912-4.

Conversation with Mr. Crackanthorpe, 312-3 (No. 348), 314-5 (No. 351).

ST. QUENTIN, COMTE DOYNE DE, 3rd Secretary of French Embassy at Constantinople, 1910-4

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SALABAČEV, M. I., Bulgarian Minister at Vienna, 1910-4.

Conversation with Sir M. de Bunsen, 296 (No. 328), 311 (No. 346).

SALIS, JOHN F. C., COUNT DE, Councillor of Embassy at British Embassy at Berlin, 1906-11 (sometimes *Chargé d'Affaires*); Minister at Cetinje, 1911-6.

To Sir E. Grey, 326-7 (No. 363).

SANDERS, LIEUTENANT-GENERAL OTTO LIMAN VON.

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SAN GIULIANO, MARQUIS DI, Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs, 1905-6; Ambassador at London, 1906-10; at Paris, 1910; Minister for Foreign Affairs, 1910-4.

Conversation with Count Berchtold, 112-3 (No. 127).

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SAUNDERS, MR. GEORGE, *Times* correspondent at Paris, 1908-14; temporary Senior Clerk in the Foreign Office, 1918-20.

Conversation with Sir F. Cartwright, 587-8 (No. 627).

SAVINSKI, M. ALEXANDER A., Russian Minister at Stockholm, 1912-4; at Sofia, 1914.

Conversation with Sir H. Bax-Ironside, 318-9 (No. 355), 329 (No. 366).

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SAVOV, GENERAL, Bulgarian Minister of War, 1912-3; Delegate to Peace Negotiations at Bucharest and Constantinople, 1913.

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SAZONOV, M. SERGE, Councillor of Russian Embassy at London, 1904-6 (sometimes *Chargé d'Affaires*); Agent to the Vatican, 1906-9; Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, 1909-10; Minister for Foreign Affairs, 1910-6

To Count Benckendorff, 106-7 (No. 121, *encl.*), 440 (No. 493), 444 (No. 498), 449 (No. 505), 451-2 (Nos. 509-10).

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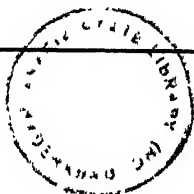
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